

ACTUAL

INDIA

AN OUTLINE FOR THE GENERAL READER

ARTHUR SAWTELL



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ACTUAL INDIA



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# ACTUAL INDIA

AN OUTLINE FOR THE  
GENERAL READER

BY

ARTHUR SAWTELL

AUTHOR OF "INDIA AND THE FISCAL PROBLEM"

*With a Map of India*

LONDON

ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1904

DS 407  
S 28



## PREFACE

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IN his recent speech at the Guildhall Lord Curzon said, "I sometimes think that the most remarkable thing about British rule in India is the general ignorance that prevails about it in England." When such a remark may be made, *nemine contradicente*, by a Viceroy of India, there need be no apology for a little book designed to serve as a brief introduction to the study of Indian affairs. The chief merit of the work is that it contains in a succinct form a quantity of information about India which the reader could not obtain for himself without consulting a great variety of larger productions, including many official publications.

There has been no attempt to produce a colourless compendium of facts. But while I have written frankly from the standpoint of an admirer of British rule in India, I have endeavoured to avoid the attitude of the partisan. The scope of the work has purposely been narrowed to a few of the leading features of Indian administration as it is to-day. In the last chapter alone I have permitted myself an excursion beyond the sphere of strict "actuality," suggesting some conclusions as to the character of the influence which we are exerting upon the people of India. These conclusions have been formed after five years' intimate observation of the practical relations between the rulers and the ruled.

ARTHUR SAWTELL.

July 25, 1904.



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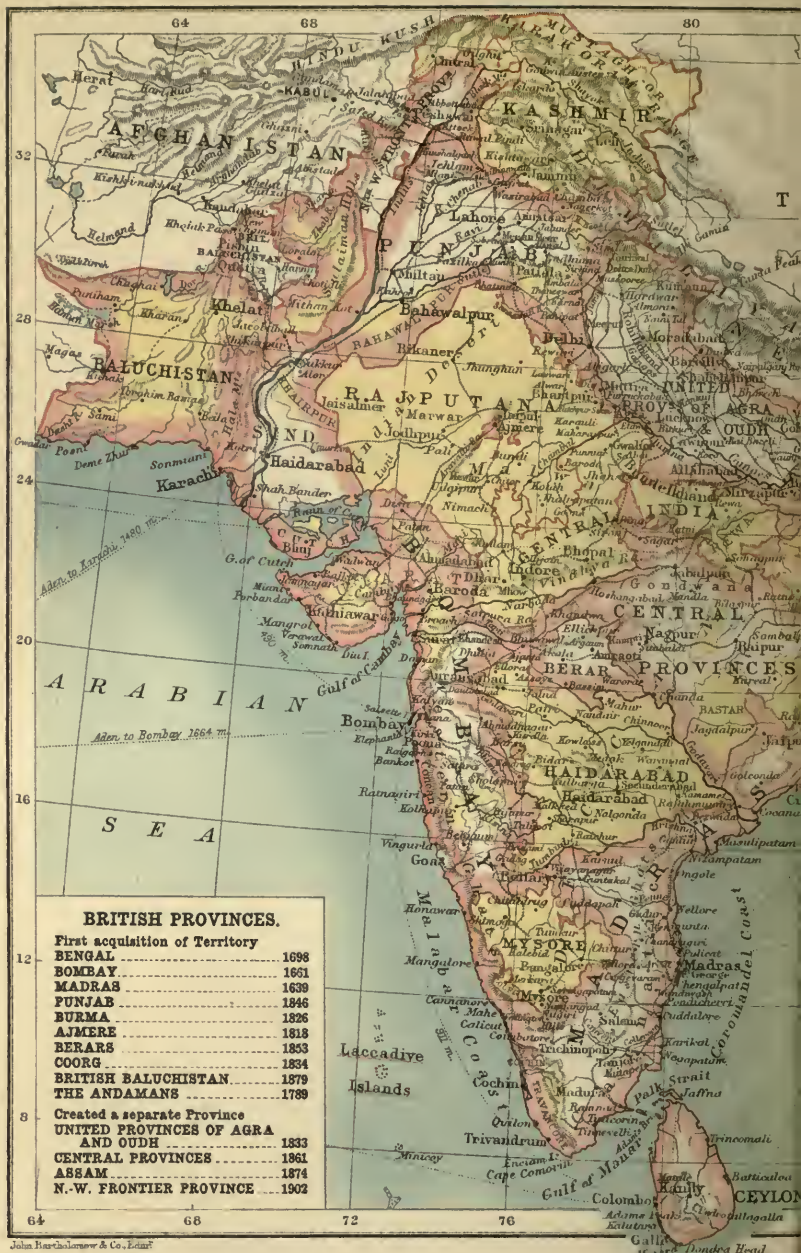
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### BRITISH PROVINCES.

First acquisition of Territory	
BENGAL	1698
BOMBAY	1661
MADRAS	1639
PUNJAB	1846
BURMA	1826
AJMER	1818
BERARS	1853
COORG	1834
BRITISH BALUCHISTAN	1879
THE ANDAMANS	1789
Created a separate Province	
UNITED PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH	1833
CENTRAL PROVINCES	1861
ASSAM	1874
N.-W. FRONTIER PROVINCE	1902

88

92

96

100

104

# INDIAN EMPIRE

English Miles  
0 50 100 200 300 400

The Native & Protected States  
are coloured yellow.



Longitude East 88 from Greenwich

92

96

104

Penang







# ACTUAL INDIA



## CHAPTER I

### GEOGRAPHICAL

**I**F you ask a "native of India" what is the land of his birth, he will never say India. He may say Hindustan (in which case you will know that he probably hails from what used to be called the North-West Provinces) ; he may tell you he comes from the Punjab, that he is a Bengali, or a man from Gujerat, as the case may be. But to the average "native of India" India is not even so much as a geographical expression, and even Hind does not mean all that India conveys to us. The Indian Empire, of course, is an actual entity, but we must always remember that it is an empire and not a distinct and self-contained country ; that it comprises far more territory than the Delhi emperors ever ruled ; that it is as large as, and more densely populated than, Europe without Russia ; and that it contains probably a greater variety of languages, races, and creeds than any equal area of the earth's surface. Many attempts have been made to impress the stay-at-home Briton with the size and complexity of India, for the most part with slight success. Do what you will, it is almost impossible to convey a just impression by paper descriptions. Nevertheless it is of the

*India an  
Empire.*

utmost importance that the English observer of India should never lose sight of the fact that India is an empire and not a country, that it is a vast empire, and that its population of 280,000,000 is far more diversified as to race, language, and religion, than the population of Europe.

To gather an adequate idea of the size of India you cannot do better than study the largest map you can find. You will gradually find that while your familiarity with Indian geography increases, your sense of the vastness of the Indian Empire will also be deepened. By way of beginning, let us take an imaginary voyage round the coast-line of India. Starting at about the 62nd meridian we sail almost due east for four or five hundred miles along the desert coast of Baluchistan. At the mouth of the Hab River we reach the boundary of British India, and passing the lonely promontory of Cape Monze, we find ourselves opposite Karachi, the port of Sind, whence the large grain exports of the Punjab are shipped to Europe. Soon after leaving the mouths of the Indus we cross the tropic of Cancer and proceed past Cutch and the Kathiawar Peninsula. Skirting the mouth of the Gulf of Cambay, we find ourselves opposite the great gateway of India, the stately city of Bombay. The coast-line, indented with innumerable small bays, now runs almost due south until we reach Goa, where the Portuguese flag still floats over an area about as large as an English county, and then we sail down the coast of Malabar, whose inlets were the strongholds of the pirates who infested the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea until comparatively recent times. Skirting the coast of Travancore (one of the few maritime native states) we reach Cape Comorin, the southernmost point of India. We are now within nine degrees of the Equator, and thus have covered some sixteen degrees of latitude since starting on our voyage. Turning north-east through the Gulf of Manar we leave Ceylon on our starboard quarter and emerge through Palk Strait into the Indian Ocean once more. Following the Coromandel coast we pass Pondicherry, where the tricolour keeps alive the memory of Duplex, and then Madras, the nursery of

*A Voyage  
Round India.*

our dominion in Asia. At the entrance to the great Bay of Bengal, opposite Masulipatam, our course becomes much more easterly, and so onwards until we leave the Madras "Presidency," and enter the head of the Bay. We now reach the mouths of the Ganges, where sits Calcutta, that wonderful creation of British commerce and dominion, in which Kipling sees Asia personified—

"Power on silt—death in my hands, but gold."

Presently we leave India proper, and sail south-east down the coast of Arakan to Cape Negrais, then round the corner due east, past the Irrawaddy Delta, up into the Gulf of Martaban, and so down the shores of Tennaserim till we reach Point Victoria, and our long voyage is over. A long voyage indeed it is, for we have followed a coast-line of some five thousand miles; starting outside the tropics, we have descended to the equatorial belt, turned northwards until we have almost retouched the tropical limit, and once again journeyed south to within ten degrees of the Equator.

But in skirting the coasts of India we have not beaten the bounds of the Indian Empire. The practice of calling India a peninsula is apt to mislead. In India itself the term peninsula has a special application. It by no means covers the whole of India, although the word is frequently employed in that sense by English writers. Look at the map again, and you will see at once that a great part of India does not belong to the Indian Peninsula at all. Draw a line from Cape Monze to Calcutta and you rule out practically the whole of Northern India from the Peninsula. Thus, in our voyage from Makran to Point Victoria we have only half finished our compassing of the Indian Empire. Long as our voyage was, it was practically confined to the tropical latitudes.

*The Land  
Frontiers.*

Our land journey takes us from the edge of the equatorial belt far into the temperate zone, from ten degrees north of the Equator and the level of the sea to the latitude of Cape Hatteras, to the climate of Canada, and to an elevation of many thousands of feet. Tracing the land boundary from the southernmost

point of Tenasserim, we find that it marches for some seven hundred miles with Siam, throws an arm round the Shan States, thereby bringing us into contact with French Indo-China; it divides Burma from the Chinese province of Yun-nan, runs along the ramparts of the hermit State of Tibet, loops in the little hill kingdom of Sikkim, marks the southern and western limits of Nepal, and thence goes mounting up into the inmost fastnesses of the Himalayas. From the north-east angle of Kashmir onwards we have to follow that north-west frontier with which every newspaper reader has a certain familiarity, more or less vague. For that vagueness there was good excuse until a few years ago, for the frontier itself was far from being precisely defined throughout its length. But now that India seems to have reached the limits of probable expansion, it is more easy to attain an exact knowledge of the Indian North-West Frontier. Starting, then, on the northern side of Kashmir,

*The North-West  
Borderland.*

we describe an irregular rectangle round Gilgit, the ultimate outpost of Kashmir, Chitral being about 130 miles due west. These two places serve as posts of observation of the passes over the Hindu Kush. Farther south, Malakand and Chakdara, both important points in the defence of the North-West Frontier, enable us to overawe the turbulent tribes of the Swat Valley, and the border now embraces the Khyber Pass, which is linked by rail with Calcutta, Jamrud being the rail-head. The Kuram Valley, the next important pass, and the Gomal, which both give access to Afghanistan, are also in our occupation. From the Gomal the boundary trends southward, almost parallel with the Indus, until it meets the sea at Cape Monze. Thus we have traced the

*The Frontier  
Zone.*

north-west boundary of India from the far north of Kashmir to the Arabian Sea; but there is yet another boundary farther west, and the intervening space of wild hills, peopled by wilder tribes, forms what we understand by the North-West Frontier. That frontier is not a mere line on the map. It is, in fact, a zone of tribal country, varying in width from the length of the Khyber Pass to the whole breadth of Baluchistan.

The outer boundary puts India cheek by jowl with Afghanistan, from the Hindu Kush to British Baluchistan, while our lines of occupation through the Khyber, the Kuram, and the Gomal are like chains thrown out to bind the extreme frontier to the old border. British Baluchistan lies like an island surrounded on three sides by the tribal country over which we exercise control, and on the fourth by the Kandahar province of Afghanistan. It is moored to the rest of India by the railway from Sukkur, while a line of occupation through Zhob connects Loralai with the Gomal.

Except for such outlying dependencies as Aden and the Andaman Islands, we have now visited every part of the frontiers of the Indian Empire. The long journey by sea and land—from the coast of Makran far into the Indian Ocean, from the palm-fringed shores of Tenasserim to the snowy passes of the Roof of the World—should be enough to dispose finally of the delusion that India is a distinct country. Truly it would be a wonderful country which, spreading itself so far east and west, stretching to so many different climates and meeting with such a variety of races, yet remained homogeneous, inhabited by people of like characteristics, of similar desires, and equal ambitions. It is worth our while to have beaten the bounds of the Indian Empire if thereby we have been duly impressed with its vastness and heterogeneity. These facts, however, will be brought still more closely home to us by studying its interior geography.

Like "all Gaul," India is (roughly) divided into three parts. There is first the Himalayan belt running north-west from the borders of Assam to the Hindu Kush; next there are the great plains of Northern India, watered on the west by the Indus and its tributaries, on the east by the Gangetic system, and bounded on the south by the Vindhya Mountains; thirdly comes the Peninsula, which the ancient Hindus called the Deccan, or land of the South.<sup>1</sup> Think

*The Three  
Natural  
Divisions.*

<sup>1</sup> The name Deccan nowadays has a more restricted application. It is usually understood to apply only to the central plateau of the Peninsula.



for a moment of Europe (without Russia), and divide it similarly into three sections—on the north Scandinavia, the British Isles, Holland, and Prussia; in the centre France, Southern Germany, and Austro-Hungary; in the south, Spain and Portugal, Italy and the Balkan Peninsula. Immediately differences and contrasts as to climate, scenery, population, language, religion, arts, spring before the mind. You would smile at the suggestion that because all the inhabitants of these regions are white, and all, except in the south-east, Christians, therefore all are very much alike. Well, it is equally absurd to suppose, because the 300 million inhabitants of India are mostly brown and largely Hindus, that there is little or no difference between them. Just as Northern Europe has its distinctive features of climate, people, and scenery, so Himalayan India is utterly distinct in all these characteristics from Hindustan or the Peninsula. Similarly the peasants of Normandy or the Landes have absolutely nothing in common except their religion with the mountaineers of the Tyrol, and no one would mistake an Irishman from the western bogs for a Pomeranian farmer. In the same way you have only to see a Jat from the Punjab and a cultivator of Lower Bengal to be struck with the difference, amounting in many respects to contrast, between them. Both are Hindus and both agriculturists, but the parallel goes no further. The Bengali again is utterly unlike the ryot of Bombay, with whom a man of Rajputana would scorn to be associated, while the landowner of Oudh could not understand a word spoken by a Madrasi in his own vernacular. As the people of India differ, so do the regions in which they dwell. The popular idea that India is a hot country is correct—up to a point. But there are several different kinds of heat in

*Climates and  
Products.*

India, and in the north, even in the plains, the night frosts of mid-winter are severe. While it is true that heat is general throughout India (always excepting the mountains, of course), it is wrong to describe the Indian climate as tropical. In the first place there are many climates in India, just as there are in Europe, and in the second place a great part, a very populous part, of

India lies outside the tropics altogether. Hence it is that in the Punjab, Northern Rajputana, in Sindh, and a part of the United Provinces you have vast plains, in the hot weather arid and apparently lifeless, in the rainy and cold seasons covered with crops of wheat, barley, maize, and other products of the temperate and sub-tropical zones. In Lower Bengal, on the other hand, you have the India of the picture books—rank with luxuriant vegetation, abounding in swampy jungle, where a swarming population lives in innumerable villages hidden amongst the palms and banyan-trees of what, seen from above, would look like a limitless forest. On the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, and nowhere else, you may find “India’s coral strand” with its fringe of cocoanut palms and its background of hills which break the rain-clouds as they drive inland before the monsoon gales. In the central plateau of the Peninsula the *fauna* and *flora* are generally tropical, but the climate is milder than on the surrounding coasts, and free from the extremes of the northern regions. It is less densely populated than Bengal or the United Provinces, and naturally a poorer country, though its black cotton soil is extremely fertile when the rainfall is good. Irrigation on the scale adopted in the north is physically impossible, and the failure of the monsoon is here felt earlier and more severely than in any other part of the empire. Yet, again, in Burma the conditions are different from those of India proper. Lower Burma is physically similar to Lower Bengal, but the upper part of the province is hilly, less tropical, and less abundant. The whole province is scantily populated, 8,000,000 at the most inhabiting an area of 171,000 square miles, more than the whole of Bengal with its 75 millions of inhabitants.

## CHAPTER II

### HOW INDIA IS GOVERNED

THE Indian Empire consists of two main divisions—British India and the Native States. The first is the larger both in area and population, but the Native States, excluding Baluchistan and the tribal country on the North-West, cover an area of 610,836 square miles out of a total of 1,559,603, and embrace a population of some 70,000,000. At the head of this empire is the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, behind whom loom (somewhat dimly to the naked eye) his Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the British Parliament, and the Crown. The broad relations of India to the United Kingdom are simple. The King is Emperor of India, and the British Government, as the highest executive authority in the British Empire, is responsible for the government and defence of the Empire of India. The Viceroy is chosen by the Government of the day, and appointed by the Crown. Appointments to all the higher offices under the Government of India are made by the Secretary of State after the selection of candidates (usually by competitive examination) in England. Seventy thousand British troops are maintained, at India's expense, for the garrisoning of the country, and the British officers of the native army are appointed by the Crown. But the closer relations between the Indian and the British Governments are more complicated.

*Relations  
between  
India and  
Britain.*

Theoretically, the Government of India is subject



(through the Crown) to the will of the British people, expressing itself through the House of Commons. This relationship manifests itself, for the most part, negatively. The British Government is dependent on the support of the House of Commons, where the balance of parties is dependent in turn on the votes of the constituencies. If the Government of India passed some measure or took some step disapproved by British public opinion, the latter might force the repeal or abandonment in India of the objectionable measure or policy. It is this possibility that

*The British  
People the  
Masters of  
India.*

makes the British public, in the last resort, the masters of India. The cotton duties supply an instance in which that mastery, so largely theoretical, is reduced to practice. India is a

great market for the cotton goods of Lancashire, but Lancashire retains the full enjoyment of that market by virtue of the policy of the open door, which the Government of India is compelled to adopt. There is a duty on all cotton goods imported into India, but in order to prevent that duty from favouring the indigenous product, the Indian authorities, at the instance of the Home Government, impose an equalising duty on all cotton goods manufactured in India. Great Britain gets no advantage from this arrangement as against foreign countries trading with India; but it is doubtful whether, if England were not so largely interested in the Indian market, the Government of India would have been obliged to equalise its cotton duties. The sugar duties in India were a case, on the other hand, in which the British public refrained from exerting its powers of interference in Indian affairs. Prior to the abolition of Continental sugar bounties under the Brussels Convention, the Indian Government imposed a countervailing duty upon all imported sugar which received a bounty on production or export. Great Britain produces no sugar and pays no bounties; therefore this measure on the part of the Indian Government was allowed to pass almost unheeded by public opinion at Home.

These two instances show how far the indirect, but none the less real, authority of the British democracy is exercised

in Indian affairs. In everyday practice, however, this authority almost disappears. With a strong Government at

Home, a strong Secretary of State, and a strong  
*Parliament's* Viceroy, India may be governed, within limits,  
*Nominal* virtually without reference to public feeling in  
*Control.* the United Kingdom, supposing such public

feeling to exist. This is largely explained by the fact that the House of Commons has no direct control of Indian affairs. The Secretary of State for India makes an annual budget statement to the House of Commons—or to such a residuum thereof as is left after the summer exodus to the moors and the sea. But this is so much a formality that the administration of India would still go on even if the Indian budget were not presented to Parliament at all. In the case of all other departments of Government the House of Commons has to vote certain estimates, including a vote for the salary of the Secretary of State. This gives the opportunity to members of the House to call into question the administration of the department by proposing to reduce some particular estimate, usually the salary of the Minister concerned. But the House of Commons enjoys no such prerogative in the case of the India Office. To quote Sir Charles Dilke, “the Secretary of State for India is his own Treasury and his own Parliament. . . . There may be a nominal responsibility in the Secretary of State for India to Parliament; but that responsibility can be enforced even less, personally and directly, than in the case of any other Minister.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus the House of Commons itself has but a small voice in Indian affairs, and anomalous or illogical as this fact may appear to a Parliamentarian, it must be remembered that the whole relations of India with the United Kingdom are fundamentally anomalous, and the anomaly would only be enhanced by enlarging the powers of a democratic assembly like the House of Commons over an autocratic government like that of India. The Secretary of State for India is responsible to the British Government, which is responsible

<sup>1</sup> *East and West*, November, 1901.

to the Crown and, through the Crown, to the nation, for the due government of India. The Viceroy is responsible immediately to the Secretary of State and so secondarily to the British Government and to the Crown. To assist and advise him in his duties the Secretary of State, who rarely has any personal experience of India, has a Council of ten, appointed by himself. At least nine of the councillors must be persons who have lived for ten years in India, and who have not left that country more than ten years previously to their appointment. They hold office for ten years,<sup>1</sup> but are removable in certain conditions on a representation from Parliament, and the Secretary of State may, for special reasons to be laid before Parliament, reappoint a member for five years. The principle of the Council is excellent, but in practice it does not exert a greatly marked influence upon the conduct of Indian affairs. The Secretary of State is empowered to treat as secret such matters as demand special urgency and privacy, so that a great deal may pass between India and the India Office without the Council's knowledge. The members of the Council have no powers of initiation, and the Secretary of State is not bound to defer to their opinions. Moreover, they are usually elderly men whose best work has been done and who every year are growing more and more out of touch with the existing generation of Indian officials and with the actual facts and exigencies of Indian administration. Possibly, if the appointments to the India Council, and the limit of absence from India were reduced to five years, or if (as has been suggested) the members were given specific administrative duties and responsibilities—like the members of the Viceroy's Council in India—this body would become both weightier and more efficient. But at present the Council is rather potentially than actually important, and its chief utility consists in preserving, by its advice based upon experience, a continuity of policy in regard to the broad lines of Indian administration.

The existing tendency is to leave the details of adminis-

<sup>1</sup> Three members may be appointed for life,

tration to the Government of India and to throw upon them more and more the responsibility of initiation. In this way is avoided the danger of over-interference from Home—a danger induced by the rapid means of communication between India and England, the increased commercial interests of England and India, and the growth of public knowledge of Indian politics. In this way also the importance and responsibility of the Indian Government is increased, and it is now more necessary than ever that the Viceroy should be a statesman of the first rank. A weak and indolent man as Viceroy will ordinarily allow himself to be guided exclusively by his officials and so become the figure-head of a great bureaucracy ; while in times of crisis he will fail to protect India's interests against the interference of the British Government and fall into the position of a servant carrying out the mandates of the Secretary of State.

*Where Initiative and Responsibility Lie.*

The Government of India is not only the supreme legislative and executive authority for British India ; but it also exercises control over the native states, interfering when necessary in their administration, removing their rulers, and even taking over their entire charge for periods of years. It also holds the exchequer of the Indian Empire ; all revenue being remitted to and disposed of by the Government of India alone. On its executive side the Government of India is "the Governor-General in Council," which consists of the Viceroy and five <sup>1</sup> ordinary members of Council with the Commander-in-Chief as an extraordinary member. This Council corresponds to the Cabinet in a constitutional government. On its legislative side the Government of India is still called the Governor-General in Council, but in this case the Council is a much larger body. It includes, of course, all the members of the Executive Council, and consists, in addition, of the governor of the province in which it may be held, and certain official and non-official

*What the Government of India is.*

<sup>1</sup> Shortly to be increased to six.



members from the various provinces selected by the Viceroy. This last provision secures the representation on the Council of unofficial opinion, both European and native. Of course it is a very feeble substitute for direct representation of the people in the legislature. But so far as it goes it is by no means ineffective. Very liberal privileges of question and discussion are enjoyed by these non-official members of Council, and the debates of the Council are public, so that publicity is amply secured. On the other hand the Government always retains a majority of official members, so that the non-officials have no chance of combining to throw out any measure brought before the Council. The initiative, moreover, lies entirely in the hands of the Government. There is no such thing as "a Private Member's Bill," and in practice the *rôle* of the non-official member is simply consultative and advisory. The broad principles of a Bill are always thoroughly thrashed out in Select Committee before it is brought for full discussion before the Council, and little remains for the latter except the discussion of details. Should, however, the opposition of the non-official element to any particular measure be sufficiently unanimous and well founded, the Bill may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Government, or the Viceroy may withhold his assent, or in the last resort the King's "power of disallowance" may be exercised.

The Legislative Councils in the provinces are modelled, with some variations, on the Supreme Legislative Council. The provinces possessing these bodies are, Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the Punjab, and Burma. The Central Provinces and Assam are administered by Chief Commissioners without Legislative Councils. Ajmere (in Rajputana), British Baluchistan, and the new Frontier Province are under the direct control of the Governor-General, who appoints "agents" to these territories as chief executive and administrative officers. The Legislative Councils in the six larger provinces are practically similar to each other in composition, except that in Madras, Bombay, and Bengal the nomination of a certain number of non-

*Provincial  
Councils.*

official members is delegated to public bodies, such as municipal corporations, chambers of commerce, and learned societies. This is a further extension of the principle of admitting a representative element to the Councils. In all the provinces a certain proportion of the members must be non-officials appointed by the Governor-General, but in every case there is always an official majority.

A certain amount of local self-government obtains in various parts of India, the product of the Local Self-Government Act passed during Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty in 1882-84. There are over 750

*Local Self-Government.*

municipal towns, with a population of nearly 16,000,000, and all these municipalities are elective. District and local boards have also been established on a partly elective basis in the more advanced provinces. These bodies levy rates and spend them upon local sanitation, education, roads, lighting, and so forth. Their duties are not exacting, and, except in the larger towns, it cannot be said that they take them very seriously. It frequently happens that district and local boards fail to hold the minimum number of meetings during the year, while cases have occurred where the formality of a periodical election has been "forgotten." Such as they are, however, these bodies are an interesting experiment in grafting representative institutions upon an alien and somewhat unpromising stock. The principal drawback to their success is the apathy of the people themselves, and the cheap estimation in which the honour of election to such bodies is held by the small number of persons capable of sustaining it. But local self-government affects a very small portion

*The District Officer.*

of the Indian peoples. Nor are the majority consciously affected by the doings of the various legislative Councils, whose existence very few of them have heard of or are capable of comprehending. The District Officer, who collects the revenue, who exercises summary jurisdiction, who issues orders for the repair of a road, the cleaning of an insanitary quarter, or the reinforcement of the police at a particular village, who, in short, is a County Council, a Quarter Session, a Chief

Constable, a Surveyor of Taxes, and a District Engineer all rolled into one man, is to all intents and purposes the Government, so far as the majority of India's inhabitants are concerned. They know that behind him looms the "Sirkar," a great and awful entity, but the Sirkar is too impersonal and too distant for them to understand or think much about it. It is the Collector Sahib, or the Deputy Commissioner Sahib, who is the Protector of the Poor, the Mother and the Father of the People.

He lives amongst them and knows, or tries to know them. He levies taxation and collects the revenue upon their land; he dispenses simple justice; he controls the operations of a small army of subordinates; he fends for the people in time of sudden disaster, and, if they need and deserve it, pleads for them with Government. As in their religion so in their politics. The supreme Source of Life and Law seems too far away for these simple souls to approach; they prefer the more accessible divinities who people the lower halls of the Pantheon. So the Supreme Government, the Sirkar as they call it, is too distant to engage their thoughts; the District Officer is of more immediate practical importance, for he can materially affect the happiness of the people under his control. This being so, we must now consider his work and the whole machinery of which he forms so important a part. British administration in India on its executive side, then, will be the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### HOW INDIA IS GOVERNED (*continued*)

**I**N the previous chapter we surveyed the Government of India from the top downwards—from the Secretary of State and his Council to the provincial legislatures, with a glance at the small local bodies entrusted with local administration in certain towns and districts. In this chapter I propose to begin at the bottom, inasmuch as the executive responsibility is very largely devolved upon the units who compose the great body of British administration in India. That body, practically speaking, is the Indian Civil Service, with its subsidiary branches. Unlike the civil services of other countries, the Indian Civil Service is a special department with its own entrance qualifications, its own grades, its own emoluments, and its particular duties. When we speak of the Civil Service at Home we include in the term all classes of Government servants. The Secretary to the Board of Trade and the postal clerk who sells you a shilling's worth of stamps are equally members of the Civil Service. But the Indian Civil Service does not include all the Departments of Government, such as the Public Works, the Medical, the Police, the Postal, the Educational Departments, and so forth. These are run on their own lines, and though a member of the Civil Service may be put at the head, say, of the Police, or the Post Office in a province, such departments are necessarily manned by officers with special qualifications, whose careers



are entirely devoted to those branches of the administration. The Indian Civil Service consists of a body of men appointed after examination in England, to whom are entrusted the administrative, the executive, and the judicial charge of the districts into which India is divided, and the conduct of the various bureaus, or secretariats, of Government, both supreme and provincial. Speaking broadly, the only avenue into this service is through competitive examination, with two years' subsequent probation in England.<sup>1</sup> The test is a severe one, and it is right that it should be so. The only drawback is that it is too exclusively intellectual. While it ensures that every member of the Indian Civil Service is a person of liberal education possessing considerable powers of mental application, it does not guarantee his fitness to rule over a million of people. This, however, is a drawback inseparable from a system of selection by examination, and in practice it has not yet begun to operate markedly to the disadvantage of British administration in India.

As was intimated at the close of the previous chapter, the happiness of the people depends in a large measure upon the administration of the district. The district is the unit of administration of India, just as the union is the unit for Poor Law purposes in England. In the latter case the Board of Guardians is entrusted with the administration of the law, and the amount of pauperism in a particular union may be seriously affected by, while the comfort of the paupers is necessarily dependent upon, the degree of efficiency with which the Board of Guardians discharges its duties. Similarly in India the condition of a district depends

*The District,  
the Unit of  
Administration.*

<sup>1</sup> In certain provinces, such as Assam, Oudh, and the Punjab, a proportion of appointments to the service have been made from the Indian Army, a provision which results in the product of a type of public servant known by the paradoxical description of "military civilian." There is also a small proportion of what are known as "statutory civilians"—that is to say, natives of India appointed directly to positions in the Indian Civil Service, or promoted thereto from the Provincial Civil Service, recruited exclusively in India. The force of the term "statutory" consists in the fact that the Government of India was first empowered to create this class of civil servant by an Act of Parliament passed in 1870.

very largely upon the zeal, the efficiency, and the discretion of the District Officers, who have to administer not a particular law,<sup>1</sup> as the Board of Guardians has in England, but practically the whole law, including the assessment of taxes and the levying of land revenue. The Head of the District is the Magistrate and Collector, called the Deputy Commissioner in a few provinces. He is assisted by two or three junior officers of his own service, and a staff of subordinates belonging (1) to the provincial civil service, (2) to the lower, or "non-gazetted," ranks of revenue officials. The last two classes of functionaries in an overwhelming majority are composed of Indians. The few Europeans employed in the provincial service are also "statutory natives," that is to say, persons born in India whose parents were genuinely domiciled there. The subordinate revenue officials consist of the Tehsildars,<sup>2</sup> who have charge of the tehsils, or sections into which the district is divided, assistant or naib-Tehsildars, Kanungos, or supervisors of the village revenue accounts, in a subdivision of each Tehsil, and Patwaris, or Patels, village accountants. Below these come the Zaildars, or headmen over a zail or circle of villages; Inamdars, or rural notables; and lastly, the village headmen, or lambardars. The following table gives a bird's-eye view, as it were, of the *personnel* of district administration:—

Magistrate and Collector, or Deputy Commissioner.	} I.C.S.
Joint Magistrate and Collector, or Assistant Commissioner.	
Assistant Magistrate and Collector, or Junior Assistant Commissioner.	
District Superintendent of Police.	} Under Orders of Magistrate and Collector.
European Assistant.	
Subordinate Police.	
Deputy Collectors, or Extra Assistant Commissioners (Provincial Civil Service).	
Tehsildars.	
Naib-Tehsildars (with or without magisterial powers).	
Kanungos (supervisors of village accounts).	
Patwaris (village accountants).	

<sup>1</sup> There is no poor law, by the way, in India, the family and caste systems rendering it unnecessary.

<sup>2</sup> Called in Bombay *Mamlatdars*.

From this it will be seen that the Collector is a king in his district—a king, in fact, who reigns as well as rules. In rural districts more especially the Head of the District enjoys the prestige of royalty. He says to one Come, and he cometh, to another Go, and he goeth. All the native population, from the highest ráis to the humblest coolie, are, in outward mien and verbal assurance, at any rate, his slaves. He is the recipient of innumerable petitions praying for the redress of all manner of grievances. Deputations are constantly waiting upon him, office-seekers and concession-hunters stand in long queues on his verandah awaiting audience. When he goes into camp, as he frequently must, he carries with him a small retinue of servants and clerical underlings. In the European community, whether large or small, he is a person of great consideration. His standing is equal to that of a lieutenant-colonel in the Army, and he is the representative of a Service which always takes precedence over the Military and every other department of Government. Such is one picture of the position of a Collector or Deputy Commissioner. In the other we see him immersed and almost smothered in a multiplicity of duties. As his name implies, his work consists of two main branches—magisterial and fiscal. As chief magistrate of the district he fulfils all the functions nominally vested in the mayor of an English city. That is to say, he is fully responsible for order in his district, and is empowered to punish offenders against the public peace. As we have seen, the police act almost entirely under his orders,<sup>1</sup> and the District Superintendent of Police is responsible to him for the condition of the district and the measures taken to cope with lawlessness and to apprehend criminals and misdemeanants. He is also a criminal judge in the first instance, and in appeal. He exercises original jurisdiction up to seven years' imprisonment and unlimited fines, and summary jurisdiction up to a fine of Rs. 50, or a sentence of three months' imprisonment, and can hear

<sup>1</sup> The departmental administration of the Police (*i.e.*, all arrangements as to internal discipline, promotions and transfers, armaments, clothing, &c., &c.), is carried out by the Inspector-General of each province.

appeals from the sentences of lower courts, presided over by all magistrates of the second and third class and all revenue officers. As the chief fiscal officer the Head of the District is responsible for the collection of the land revenue. To understand what that means you must know that the Government of India is the supreme landlord of the empire, and every rod of agricultural land, from Peshawar to Cape Comorin, except land given revenue free, as a Muafi or Jagir, pays its share of revenue to the Sirkar. The business of the collection of this revenue is both complex and arduous ; and it is needless to say that the Collector must be thoroughly conversant with the systems of land tenure prevailing in his province, and he may be called upon at any time by Government to give his opinion upon questions involving a considerable knowledge of agriculture. He assesses the income-tax, he supervises the collection of excise duty and stamp revenue, he has charge of the local treasury, and is in fact the accountant-general of his district. He is also the Registrar, and as such controls all Sub-Registrars of his district.

But in addition to his duties as Magistrate and Collector, the District Officer is burdened with innumerable minor, but not less exacting, obligations. We have seen that his verandah is daily thronged with petitioners and tuft-hunters of one kind and another. All these things demand attention and consume time and temper. He has to be ever on his guard against the axe-grinding of his subordinates, and to exercise a strong disciplinary influence over them. At the same time he is constantly being worried by Government for all kinds of statistical and other returns, financial, vital, economic statistics, and what not. In every case of sudden emergency he is referred to by his underlings and expected by the people to act promptly. Though he is bound down by definite regulations as to the broad lines of his work, there is still considerable scope left to his discretion and initiative. If not a law unto himself, the District Officer is at any rate a whole code of by-laws unto himself. To quote Sir William Hunter : " Police, jails, education, municipalities, roads, sanitation, dispensaries, the local taxation, and the Imperial revenue of his district are to



him matters of daily concern. He is expected to make himself acquainted with every phase of the social life of the natives, and with each natural aspect of the country. He should be a lawyer, an accountant, a financier, and a ready writer of State papers. He ought also to possess no mean knowledge of agriculture, political economy, and engineering."

From all this it may be imagined that the success of British administration in India depends in a very large

*The Backbone of  
the Adminis-  
tration.*

measure indeed upon the energy, resourcefulness, honesty, and general efficiency of the District Officer. It stands to reason that he cannot himself do everything involved in the administration of a district, which is usually as large as a good-sized English county—in Madras, in fact, the district covers a still larger area. Indeed it is not necessary that he should do so, for in addition to the two or three assistants of his own service, he has under him a crowd of subordinates, some of whom, such as the Deputy Collectors and the Tehsildars, hold very responsible positions. Still the final responsibility rests with him. He has to keep a keen eye upon the work of all the numerous functionaries under his control; nothing that occurs in the district should be beyond his knowledge; and the whole management of the district takes its tone from him. A lazy or impetuous man, one open to flattery and easily gulled by interested subordinates, a person given to prejudices against individuals or classes, or out of sympathy with the people, may do great harm as the Head of a District to the interests of the Government, and work much injustice to the people. In short, it is not too much to say, as Sir William Hunter declared, that upon the energy and personal character of the District Officer, "depend ultimately the efficiency of our Indian Government."

That being so, two or three important considerations arise. First, the District Officer should be left unhampered as far as possible by interference or interruption from above. Second, there should be greater fixity of tenure—a man once appointed to a Collectorate should be left there as long as possible. Third, it is desirable that the Head of a District

*The White  
Man's Burden—  
of Waste Paper.*

should always be an Englishman. The two first considerations have long exercised the Anglo-Indian mind. Unfortunately, with the improvement of communications the Government are brought into much closer contact with the district officials. The mail train and the telegraph place them in very close touch with the districts, with the result that a process of over-centralisation has been observable for many years past, which shows little sign of being effectually checked. India, as Lord Curzon found within a very short time of his arrival in the country, suffers from a plague of reports and Blue Books. The great central departments of Government, both supreme and provincial, are forcing-houses in which this official "literature" spawns with appalling fecundity. In the animal creation over-production is not only a characteristic of low types of life—it is positively an agent of deterioration. The rabbit, for instance, which is carefully preserved in England, has become, thanks to his ill-judged fruitfulness, a verminous nuisance in Australia. Similarly in India the over-production of reports and returns has long ago depreciated their value, so that a great part of this mass of reading matter is fit only for the waste-paper basket. Lord Curzon has undertaken the slaying of this dragon of red-tape and waste paper, but it is doubtful whether he has done more than scotch the noisome beast. It has lived and flourished for many years an embodied blasphemy of the law of supply and demand, a darkener of counsel, a monster eternally roaring to be fed. And the men who have to feed it are, for the most part, the District Officers. It is they who are called upon for returns on this, reports on that, opinions on something else—until their time, which should be devoted to the care of the district, is almost monopolised by these clerical and literary exercises. And it is for this reason that the Blue Book dragon retains his remarkable vitality. So long as the bureaucrats at Simla, Poona, or Ootacamund can call at will for these labours from the men who are bearing the white man's burden in the plains, and derive from them a certain *kudos* for themselves, so long will the tyranny last. Lord Curzon has rightly set his face against the useless

manufacture and multiplication of bulky reports on simple subjects. But his aim is rather directed to securing a certain amount of intelligent sub-editing in the Secretariats, than to checking the evil at its source by discouraging the insatiable thirst of the departments for information from the districts.

The second consideration has also engaged the attention of the present Viceroy, who has framed a new set of leave rules with the view of obviating the necessity for constantly putting temporary holders into Collectorships, without depriving the Government officer of his fair share of leave and furlough. Liberal leave allowances are necessary to men working in an Indian climate—not indeed to lucky individuals who enjoy one of the best climates in the world (that of the Lower Himalayas in the summer and the plains of Upper India in the winter), but certainly for men whose service is chiefly spent in the plains, with their long and appalling hot weather and their feverish rainy season. But it will readily be understood that with a certain proportion of officers always on leave there must be a large number of temporary transfers and acting appointments. The evil is inevitable, but it should be reduced to the smallest possible limits. A successful District Officer must know and be known by the people whom he has to govern, but this cannot be unless he is left undisturbed in a district for at least a few years at a stretch. A very common and substantial complaint amongst intelligent natives is that the Sahib of to-day does not know the people as did his predecessor of the past generation. The mail steamers which bring England and India so much closer together in point of time, serve in reality to separate the rulers and the ruled more than ever before, for no European now willingly makes India his home as did the old-fashioned Sahibs in the days of sailing vessels and the Cape passage. This tendency is very strong and is practically unavoidable. The more reason therefore for doing all that is possible to leave the District Officer in possession of his kingdom with as little interruption as may be.

The third point is the desirability that the Head of the District should always be an Englishman. After what has been said as to his duties and responsibilities this point needs little elaboration. Unfortunately this condition can never be wholly maintained, and in course of time must necessarily become more and more impaired, for the simple reason that it is now impossible to set up a racial qualification for the Indian Civil Service. To say nothing of the promise held out in the Royal Proclamation of 1858, and the principle laid down in the Act of 1870, "that additional facilities should be given for the employment of natives of India of proved merit and ability in the Civil Service of Her Majesty in India," an increasing number of educated young Indians are able to go to England and enter the Civil Service by passing the examination and undergoing the prescribed probation. Most of these officers, no doubt, eventually elect to take employment in the judicial service, where many Indians hold the highest positions with credit and distinction. But this cannot happen in every case, and if the process increases we shall find a steadily growing proportion of the highest executive appointments occupied by natives. Mr. Meredith Townsend, in his highly interesting book "Asia and Europe," sees in this process the cause of the eventual overthrow of British dominion in India. However that may be, it is to be hoped that no artificial acceleration will be given to it, as, for instance, by permitting native candidates to take the examination in India. It has indeed been influentially suggested that none but Englishmen should be permitted to enter the service by competitive examination, but that the Government should make a liberal use of its powers for the creation of "Statutory Civilians" from amongst the natives. This would have the advantage of imposing upon native candidates a more varied qualification than a purely intellectual one, which, if incomplete for Englishmen, must be much more so for Asiatics. The question, however, has not yet become pressing, and the present tendency seems to be in favour of letting matters take their course.

*A Question of  
Race.*



Up to this point I have briefly sketched the administration of the district—the unit of British rule in India. It remains to connect the district with the Provincial Governments. Next above the District comes the Division, a collection of three or more districts presided over by a Commissioner, always a senior member of the Civil Service of long experience in executive work. *The Division.* The Commissioner's duties are much less heavy than those of the Magistrate-Collector. His work consists in exercising a general supervision over the administration of the districts in his division, but if his Collectors are efficient and energetic, he has little more to do than to hold a watching brief, so to speak, for the Provincial Government. He serves as a court of appeal in all revenue matters from the decisions of the Collector, but he exercises no judicial functions, either civil or criminal. In Madras the office of Commissioner does not exist, the Collector dealing directly with the Board of Revenue in fiscal matters and with the Government itself in other affairs. The Board of Revenue is the next step in the official hierarchy. It consists usually of two members (in Madras of three), one for the land revenue and the other for the excise and other branches of taxation. In the Punjab, instead of a Board of Revenue, there are two Financial Commissioners (one of whom is called a Settlement Commissioner), but the difference is merely one of name. The Commissioners as Heads of Divisions deal with the Government in all revenue matters through the Board, and in other questions directly with the Lieutenant-Governor or Chief Commissioner, or (in Madras and Bombay) with the Governor in Council. The next chapter will be devoted to a description of the executive functions of the Provincial and Supreme Governments.

## CHAPTER IV

### HOW INDIA IS GOVERNED (*continued*)

**B** RITISH India consists of six large provinces—Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the Punjab and Burma (two minor administrations) the Central Provinces and Assam—and five *Governors.* agencies—Ajmere, British Baluchistan, Berar, Coorg, and the North-West Frontier Province. The difference between all these administrations, so far as executive work goes, is a difference, broadly speaking, only in status. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, for instance, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, and, say, the Agent to the Governor-General in Baluchistan have largely similar functions to discharge, though the extent and importance of their responsibilities necessarily vary. So far as prestige goes the Governments of Madras and Bombay stand first. They are the lineal successors, so to speak, of the old Presidencies of the same name,<sup>1</sup> and they are presided over by Governors, who, being appointed by the British and not the Indian Government, are usually Peers with a taste for public life or officials whose services in other parts of the Empire deserve especial recognition. As these Governors rarely enjoy a practical experience of

<sup>1</sup> The term Presidency as applied to an Indian province, although still officially used in respect of Bombay and Madras, has no longer any force, and should be dropped even from colloquial use. This is especially pertinent to the case of Bengal, which is now only half the size of the quondam Presidency of that name.

the countries they are called upon to administer, they are provided with an Executive Council, consisting in Bombay of two, in Madras of three, members of the Indian Civil Service having a thorough knowledge of their respective provinces. These two Governments retain the privilege of corresponding direct on certain matters (not of the first importance) with the Secretary of State, whereas the other provincial administrations deal exclusively with the Government of India. A moderate degree of pomp is maintained by the Governors, who enjoy a prestige second only to that of the Viceroy. The Lieutenant-Governors, on the other hand, maintain a much more modest establishment and personally discharge a greater amount of work. They are their own executive councils, and nothing of importance can occur in the remotest part of their provinces that is not brought to their knowledge. They receive reports from every department of their administration—including police, jails, hospitals, municipalities, schools, the returns of traffic, vital statistics, and so forth—and are expected to “review” each report with informing comments. They are constantly issuing orders both to the public and to the officials under their command. They have to keep a watch over the administration of justice, as well as over every branch of the Executive; and, in fact, as the management of a district takes its tone from the Magistrate-Collector, so the administration of a province takes its tone from the Lieutenant-Governor.

The work of the Provincial Governments is carried on through various central bureaus—such as the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, the Financial Department, the Secretariat of the Public Works Department, and so forth. Each of these Departments is under the charge of a “Secretary to Government,” who, except in the case of the technical Departments, is always a member of the Indian Civil Service. Though these Secretaries to the Government are important personages, they cannot be called advisers of the

Lieutenant-Governor. Indeed, their advice would be of small use to the latter, who is not only many years their senior, but has usually more experience than they in the work with which they are entrusted. Their position corresponds rather to that of a Parliamentary Under Secretary in England, while the Lieutenant-Governor unites in himself the functions of the various Principal Secretaries of State. Thus the head of an Indian province exercises a very strong personal rule. The only officials who rank somewhat as his colleagues are the two members of the Board of Revenue. It has been suggested that this Board should be converted into an Executive Council, the status of the Lieutenant-Governor being raised to that of a Governor. The strongest argument in favour of this view is that the newer provinces are quite as important as Bombay and Madras, with their Governors and Executive Councils, while the work of governing them is even heavier. The change, however, while far from being urgent, would certainly involve an increase in the cost of Government.

The supreme Government on its executive side consists of a number of central bureaux, each having its Secretary to Government, and also its Member of Council, or Minister, as he would be called in Europe.

*The Supreme Executive.*

First in importance comes the foreign department, of which the Viceroy himself takes charge. The Army, of course, is under the Commander-in-Chief, who ranks next to the Viceroy in the official hierarchy of India. He is always appointed an "additional member" of the Executive Council, but there is also a Military Member of Council. Thus the Army is the only department that has a double representation in what may be called the Indian Cabinet. The Home Department undertakes very much the same sort of work as the Home Office in England, with a good deal more added. The Departments of Finance and Commerce, of Law, of Revenue and Agriculture, and of Public Works, discharge the functions which their names imply. Each has its member of Council, and these six heads of Departments with the

Viceroy constitute for all executive purposes "The Governor-General in Council."<sup>1</sup>

More than once in the course of these pages the Executive Council has been likened to the Cabinet in a parliamentary Government. This simile will not bear too close an application. As a matter of fact the Executive Council of India does much more work than a Cabinet, while its members hardly hold a corresponding status to that of ministers in a Constitutional Government. Their position, indeed, is one both of less freedom and less responsibility. If the Cabinet simile were complete, the Viceroy would be merely a Prime Minister, whereas he is much more like a monarch who takes a very active part in the administration of his kingdom. It is possible, of course, for a Viceroy to be even less than a Prime Minister in his government, and to fill rather the position of a strictly constitutional sovereign who reigns but does not rule. Much depends upon his individuality and his inclination and capacity for work. Needless to say, it was never intended that the Governor-General should lapse into the *rôle* of the figurehead. His true position is at the other end of the ship of State. His hand should always be on the helm, and his officers, the Members of Council, should assist, but not supersede him, in the navigation of the vessel. India is a country where there is abundant scope for personal rule, and where a strong man in authority is understood and appreciated by the people. Indeed, personal rule is the only kind of rule that the East does understand, and in proportion as the Great Lord Sahib makes his influence felt so is the administration respected. The tendency, however, in an empire governed by a hierarchy of alien officials is towards bureaucracy. Bureaucracy spells red-tape and obscurantism. Under its influence the administration becomes a machine working behind a screen, working with splendid efficiency, no doubt, but still mechanically. Nothing is so distasteful and disheartening to Orientals as a European bureaucracy, silent, aloof, and passionless. It is not too much to say that they would

<sup>1</sup> See footnote to p. 12.



prefer a tyrant whom they knew to a caucus of thoroughly honest and highly capable officials of whose very names they were ignorant. Now it is the part of the Viceroy to correct this tendency to machinery in his government. He should keep the stream of Indian administration fluent, and he should be responsible for the direction of its course. Naturally the bureaucrats prefer King Log to King Stork. Their ideal Viceroy is a slightly glorified Colonial Governor, dignified and sufficiently amiable, but not too energetic or self-reliant, and imbued with a due sense of his ignorance of administrative work in general and of Indian affairs in particular. Happily it is not often that this ideal is completely filled. Some Viceroys approach more or less near to it, but the best Viceroy is he who is farthest removed from such a type. That is to say, the Viceroy must be a statesman with experience, and also with a great capacity for hard work and a strong individuality. The personal factor is of the highest value in the equation of Indian administration, and what has been said of the Head of the District and the Lieutenant-Governor of a province may equally be said of the Governor-General of India—the whole administration takes its tone from him. The Viceroy, in short, should be actually as well as nominally the most important person in the Government of India.

Turning from the executive government to the administration of justice, let us now take a brief survey of the Indian Judiciary. Each province in India has a *The Judiciary*. Supreme Court, from which appeals in civil suits lie to the Privy Council. In Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and the United Provinces this tribunal is called a High Court, created by Act of Parliament, with judges appointed by the Crown. The Punjab and Burma have Chief Courts, created by the Indian legislature, and with judges appointed by the Government of India. In the Central Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province the highest court is that of the Judicial Commissioner, while the High Court of Bengal hears appeals from Assam. Below the High Court come the Divisional or Sessions Judges, who correspond in the Judiciary to the Commissioners in the Executive branch



of the Administration, and the next lower court is that of the District Judge. The duties of the Sessions Judge are thus described in Chesney's "Indian Polity":—

"He holds a monthly jail delivery for the trial of all prisoners committed by the magistrates; he also hears appeals from the judgment of those officers. His powers extend to a sentence of fourteen years' imprisonment, or transportation for life. Sentences of capital punishment must be referred to the High Court before they are carried out. On the civil side the judge has a general superintendence over the course of proceedings in the numerous district civil courts of first instance. The lower class of court is that of the Munsiff, for the original hearing of all suits involving amounts not exceeding one thousand rupees. Selected Munsiffs have jurisdiction in suits up to two thousand rupees. The higher class of court is that of the Subordinate Judge, a somewhat inappropriate title, his jurisdiction being greater than that of the District Judge, since it extends to all civil suits irrespective of the amount involved, whereas the judge's jurisdiction is limited to original suits not exceeding ten thousand rupees. Appeals from the Munsiff and Subordinate Judge, in small suits, are preferred in the court of the District Judge; appeals from the decision of the latter, and of the Subordinate Judge in cases exceeding ten thousand rupees in amount, are made to the Appellate court of the province.

Generally speaking, all the higher posts in the Judiciary, except those High Court judgeships which are reserved for barristers-at-law, and for a few specially selected Native pleaders, are held by members of the Indian Civil Service. The lower courts are almost invariably presided over by natives. It usually happens that a member of the Civil Service who is appointed to the position of Divisional Judge spends the remainder of his service in judicial appointments. He does not return to district administration, nor does he succeed to secretariat appointments with the Provincial or Supreme Governments. Thus a certain process of selection goes on. Those Civil Servants who, by temperament or by training, are adapted to the administration of justice rather than to the discharge of executive duties, are withdrawn from district administration and become judges, with the prospect of rising eventually to a seat in the High or Chief Court of their province. In practice, therefore, to a certain extent there is a separation of the Judiciary from the Executive in India. But below the court of the District Judge, executive and judicial functions are often exercised by the same person, notably in the case of the

Magistrate-Collector, and his Assistants; while all the judicial officers (except the barrister and pleader judges of the provincial Appellate courts) have had Executive training. They belong to the same service as the Executive officials, and therefore it would not be surprising were they to administer justice more in the spirit of Executive servants of the Government than with the mental detachment of the lawyer. This combination of the judicial and Executive services in India is one of the stock grievances of the Indian National Congress and of those who support them in England. According to Western ideas, of course, the principle is wrong, and the demand for the complete separation of the judiciary from the Executive is merely reasonable. But in the East the principle has always been in vogue, and it is no grievance to the Oriental that the man who may sentence him to imprisonment for theft, or hear his complaint against a debtor, is the same man who assesses his income-tax, who controls the police that protect his life and property, and who may remit or suspend the revenue due from his land.

The system is justified not only by immemorial usage, but also by its practical results. If it could be shown that it poisoned the founts of justice and resulted in the oppression of the people, there would be abundant reason in the demand for its abolition. Theoretically there is much to be said for the entire separation of the judicial and Executive functions, and it cannot be denied that it may be recommended on certain practical grounds also. For one thing it would greatly lighten the work of the overburdened district officer if he were relieved of all judicial duty. That is a point in itself worthy of much consideration, for the affairs of a district would be better administered if those in charge of them could give the whole of their time to the work. But the practical difficulty involved is serious and almost insuperable. Such a change would necessitate a great increase in the number of Government officers. It would mean the establishment of a separate department of judges and magistrates, whose pay and emoluments could not well be fixed on a lower scale than that of the Administrative

service. It may be argued that the majority of the members of the new service would be natives, who do not require such large salaries as European officials in India. But it would be most undesirable in the interests of the administration of justice to place the Judiciary in the position of an inferior service. It has been found in India, as elsewhere, that liberal stipends are the best safeguard against corruption, and a cheap Judiciary would be an expensive failure. If there is to be a separate judicial service, it must be put upon such a footing as to make it as attractive to good and able men as the present Civil Service. That would entail an increase in expenditure which India cannot afford. Thus, apart from all other considerations, the expense alone might prove to be sufficient to dispose of the demand for the separation of the judicial and executive functions in India.

## CHAPTER V

### HOW INDIA IS DEFENDED

THE total military forces of the Indian Empire consist of about 300,000 men, made up as follows :—

Regulars :—

British ...	...	...	...	...	74,000
Native Army ...	...	...	...	...	140,000
Imperial Service Troops (Native States)	...	...	...	...	18,000
Volunteers, Europeans and Eurasians	...	...	...	...	30,000
Militia, Tribal Levies, Reserves, &c.	...	...	...	...	40,000

Since 1895 the Indian Army has been consolidated under a single Commander-in-Chief, and the three “Armies” of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay have been abolished in favour of a system of “commands.” There are four commands—the Punjab, Bengal, Madras, and Bombay—each under a Lieutenant-General, immediately subject to the authority of the Commander-in-Chief. The military departments have been amalgamated, and now instead of each of the three “Presidencies” having its own Commissariat, Transport, Intelligence, and so forth, a single department in each case does the work of the entire army ; all the military forces of the empire are now managed by the military department at Simla, and exclusively controlled by the Commander-in-Chief.<sup>1</sup> The British

<sup>1</sup> The Governor-General in Council, of course, is the supreme head of military affairs, but the Commander-in-Chief is the highest executive authority.

troops in India consist of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and although they are allotted to the various commands, they may be and are regularly transferred from one command to another. The Native Army, on the other hand, is more closely restricted to particular commands. The Punjab regiments, for instance, do not, as a rule, serve in peace time outside that province or the North-West Frontier, while the troops of the Bengal command are not stationed in any large numbers in Madras or Bombay. But the four commands cover such wide areas that there is no danger of over-localisation of the Army Corps that belong to them. The Madras troops garrison Burma, while the Bombay command includes the whole of Sind and the frontier territory of Baluchistan. It must not be supposed, moreover, that the name of the command is necessarily descriptive of the troops that belong to it. There is not a single Bengali in the whole of the Indian Army. The Bengal regiments are composed of Sikhs, Rajputs, Hindustani Mahommedans—of any one except Bengalis—and a large number of them are included in the Punjab command. The only command the name of which

*The Fighting  
Races.*

may be said to fit the troops that belong to it is the Punjab. This is the largest of the four, and it shares with Bengal the greater part of the prestige of the Indian Native Army. The Punjabi, generally speaking, is a fighting-man. When he is not a soldier by instinct or tradition, he is readily trained to become one. The Sikhs, as every one knows, are *par excellence* the martial race of India. The Punjab is their fatherland, and although there are less than two million of them all told, they contribute as many as 35 squadrons of cavalry and 174 companies of infantry to the Native Army. The Punjabi Mahommedan is also a valuable recruit, and he figures prominently in the Army Corps of Bombay as well as in that of his native province. In fact Punjabis, both Sikh and Mahommedan, are to be found largely represented in all four commands. Several Madras Infantry regiments, particularly those which are chiefly stationed in Burma, consist entirely or almost entirely of Punjabis.



Thus the Punjab is the most important recruiting ground of India. But Baluchis, Pathans, Dogras (a Hindu caste of Northern India), Rajputs, Mahrattas, Moplahs (a race of Mahommedans in Southern India), and Deccani Mahommedans, are all found in the ranks of the Indian Army, while the fame of the Gurkha as a soldier of the King is world-wide. Here perhaps it is worth while to point out that the leading fighting races of India—the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, the Rajputs, and the Mahrattas—are all Hindus. I mention this only because an impression seems to exist amongst people whose knowledge of India and Indian history is more peculiar than extensive, that the Mahommedans alone are of any account as defenders of the Indian Empire. When a popular novelist gives Mahommedan names to Sikh soldiers and represents them as cursing the Hindus and “all their lying Pantheon,” humbler people may be pardoned for a similar error. The Mahommedans, of course, are a most important element in the Indian Army. They are for the most part brave and manly, especially when descended from Arab or Afghan invaders. But they have not a monopoly of those qualities, and it is only fair to the Hindus to emphasise the very important share that they take in the defence of India. As for the Sikhs, they are the flower of modern Indian chivalry, and the noblest examples of Indian loyalty to the British Raj. Their simple faith, purged of the grosser elements of common Hinduism, seems to have implanted in them those virtues of courage and manly pride which distinguish them amongst Asiatics. Their traditions (though but of yesterday, in a land where kings and castes trace their descent from the gods) are full of noble struggle against oppression, of glorious victory, and splendid sovereignty. Quiet and content in time of peace, at all times obedient to discipline, bold as lions in the fight, they are unsurpassed as soldiers by the finest types of Europe.

I may refer also to a more serious misconception prevalent in England, and that is that the Indian Native Army is inexhaustible, and that India, with its 300,000,000



inhabitants, is a vast recruiting ground from which, in time of need, the Empire might draw thousands of men as it required. This is a false and dangerous idea. In an empire founded upon maritime dominion, India is the single point where an overland invasion is a contingency seriously to be reckoned. It is the heel of Achilles, the one spot vulnerable by an enemy which does not possess command of the sea. The day may come when India will require every man of her forces, regular and auxiliary, to defend her borders. There is little danger that the Army will be increased beyond India's needs, for the ample reason that the sources open to recruiting are already well tapped. Indeed, the recruiting question in India is not an easy one. It would be difficult to maintain the Army on a very much larger footing without lowering the *personnel* on the one hand or greatly increasing the cost on the other. To suppose that because India teems with population it could provide an army of any strength for which the Empire could afford to pay, is to make a childish blunder. A great majority of the inhabitants of India are utterly unwarlike, and the available sources of recruiting are small and well defined.

The Imperial Service troops consist of contingents raised by Native States and maintained at a point of efficiency rendering them capable of taking the field side by side with the regular army. The ordinary "Army" of the Native State is maintained chiefly for purposes of pageant. As an organised fighting force it does not exist, and the Imperial power has nothing either to fear or to expect from the large bodies of men in uniform usually included in the retinue of a native ruler, and called his "army." Up to the time of Lord Dufferin these were the only forces of which the Native States could boast. No attempt had been made to utilise the loyalty of the Native princes for the purposes of Imperial defence. Indeed, Lord Lytton's proposal to that end was received with some hostility in official circles, and it was reserved for Lord Dufferin, some six or eight years later, to

*The Indian  
Army not  
Inexhaustible.*

*Imperial  
Service Troops.*

take the project up and bring it to a practical result. Since then the Imperial Service contingents have improved in numbers and efficiency. Nearly every state that can afford it maintains a well-equipped and well-trained force, ranging from 165 in a small Punjab State to 3,168 men in the large frontier state of Kashmir. The contingents of the larger states of Rajputana and Central India in most cases exceed a thousand in number, with a preponderance of cavalry. There are two Inspectors-General and a staff of Inspecting and Assistant-Inspecting officers, who are permanently stationed in the states whose contingents are placed under their charge. All these officers belong to the Indian Army, and they are the only Europeans connected with the Imperial Service troops. The contingents, or some of them, have already seen active service both on the North-West Frontier and in China, where the Jodhpur Cavalry especially distinguished itself. There is no doubt that the Imperial Service troops are a valuable addition to the Indian forces, while they are an excellent means to rulers of Native States of showing their loyalty. They also afford to Native princes an added interest in life, and bring them into touch with the main stream, so to speak, of Imperial affairs.

The British officers of the Native Army include some 2,500 officers of all ranks, of whom about 2,000 are employed in regimental duty. The Native officers are commissioned from the ranks, and only occasionally are direct commissions given to natives of high birth. The obvious drawback to this arrangement is that it closes the doors of the Army to all natives above the rank of the peasant or the petty landholder. This is more particularly felt by Indian gentlemen whose estates are situated in British territory. In Native States the higher members of the military classes have some chance of congenial employment, but in British India the Native gentry, unless they care to interest themselves in local affairs—for which very few of them are adapted—are condemned to idleness. Not only is this state of things undesirable in itself, but, as has been pointed out, it is

*The Officering  
of the Army.*

directly contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the Proclamation of 1858, which declares, "Our subjects of whatever race or creed shall be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge." Some amendment has recently been made by Lord Curzon, who has established a cadet corps for young men of good family who have passed through one of the various Chiefs' Colleges established at Ajmere, Lahore, and elsewhere. The idea is that these cadets, should they desire to pursue a military career after passing through the corps, will be appointed to commissions in the Regular Army and given either staff or regimental employment.

There are about 30,000 European Volunteers in India, consisting of cavalry and mounted infantry, infantry, garrison artillery, and a few companies of engineers. On  
*Volunteers.* the call for volunteers for the Boer War, the corps called Lumsden's Horse was formed in India, the majority of those who joined it being drawn from various bodies of Volunteer Light Horse. The men were nearly all expert riders and shots, and they rendered a very good account of themselves during nine months' campaigning in South Africa. The distinction that they gained apparently awakened the Indian Government to the fact that in the Volunteers they possessed a valuable auxiliary force meriting more serious consideration than had previously been given them. At any rate, an Inspector-General of Volunteers was appointed in 1901, and his influence has already been felt as a wholesome stimulus. In case of internal trouble in India occurring during the progress of a great campaign on the North-West Frontier, the Volunteers would be required to discharge very onerous responsibilities. Those corps drawn from the employees on the railway lines would have specially important work to do, and fortunately they are the most efficient and the best officered of all the Volunteer Infantry in India.

The complaint is sometimes made that the Indian Army, British and Native, is in excess of India's necessities. The

contention is that the military forces of India are maintained on their present footing for general Imperial purposes, and not exclusively for the defence of India. This argument derives some colour from such circumstances as the despatch of 5,000 British troops from India to Natal on the outbreak of the Boer War, and the employment of one cavalry and three infantry brigades in China during the Boxer rising. The critics say, "If India can spare all these troops at one time she can spare them altogether; why, then, is the Indian Army kept on so large a footing if not for the purpose of providing a reserve that may be drawn upon by Great Britain for military operations in which India has no direct concern?" Such criticism entirely overlooks the fact that India is able, on occasion, thus to reinforce the Imperial forces only because the British Navy stands behind all the military strength of the British Empire. Should England be involved in a European war, she would be at war all over the world, and the defence of India would demand the employment of the whole of the 200,000 regular troops which she maintains. If India were held by a Power not enjoying the command of the sea, her army would be at least treble its present size. It is because India forms part of a worldwide Empire, and an Empire founded upon maritime dominion, that the Indian Army is so small.

As Lord Kitchener observes in his recent memorandum on the training of Indian officers (issued in April, 1904), in an army "admittedly small for the purposes for which it is maintained, there is all the more need for a higher standard of excellence than obtains elsewhere." The present Commander-in-Chief is addressing himself with characteristic earnestness to the business of developing the Indian forces to the highest point of efficiency, but a good deal of progress was already being made when Lord Kitchener went to India. For some time past the Government have been slowly but steadily pursuing the ideal of making India entirely self-supporting in respect to war material. Preparations are being made for the

*The Smallness  
of the Indian  
Army.*

*Its Efficiency.*

manufacture of cordite in India, and a gun-carriage factory has been erected at Jubbulpore at a cost of over half a million rupees. The new rifle factory at Ishapore will be provided with machinery costing Rs. 2,205,000, and at the same place new rolling mills are to be opened, to supplement those already at work at Cossipore, for the manufacture of steel rods and bars, cupro-nickel, &c. A still more important step is the establishment of a factory at Cossipore for the manufacture of field guns, for which machinery costing more than a million rupees will be required. This policy of rendering India self-dependent in regard to armaments is obviously sound from a military standpoint; and, though the initial cost is heavy, it is also to be commended on the score of economy. It is clearly preferable that India, instead of importing all her war material from England, should derive such profit as may be obtainable from its manufacture by her own people. While these measures are being taken in regard to *matériel*, some highly desirable changes have been made in the *personnel* of the Native Army. Ten battalions of Madras Infantry have been reconstituted, troops from Northern India, chiefly the Punjab, taking the place of the Madras sepoy. This change will result in the virtual disappearance of the Telinga as a soldier, and will give the Madras Army a much finer type of man. One "Hindustani Mahommedan" regiment has been disbanded (*i.e.*, a regiment consisting of Mahommedans from Hindustan, which is roughly identical with the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh), leaving three battalions of this class, it having been found impossible to maintain four such battalions, owing to the scarcity of suitable recruits.

It is a gratifying fact that the military expenditure of India during recent years has actually decreased. Probably

*Decreased  
Expenditure.*

India is the only civilised country in the world of equal importance of which this can be said. The net military expenditure for the four years 1895-1899 was £63,286,760, besides £3,139,884 for military works and special defence. For the following four years (1899-1903) the amount was only £59,452,510



with £3,518,347 for military works. For the same periods the total expenditure of the Indian Empire increased from £260,943,454 in 1895-1899 to £285,012,910 in 1899-1903. Thus, while more and more money is being spent on the administration and internal development of the Empire, actually less has been devoted to its defence. This circumstance is due partly to the saving effected by the employment of Indian troops in China and British troops from India in South Africa, a quite exceptional cause and one for which the Indian Government cannot claim any credit. But it is also largely due to the absence of war on the North-West Frontier, and in that connection the Government may at least be congratulated on its good fortune.

Military criticism may be left to military critics, but it is well to remember that the Indian Army is not without its limitations. The tendency with the Home public is to judge the Indian Army by its show troops and its *corps d'élite*. In this way is created the false impression that in the Indian forces the British Empire possesses a great reserve of strength. That feeling arises also from that defective geographical conception of India against which the reader was warned in the opening chapter. When it is realised that India, so far from being a country compact and homogeneous, is a great sub-continent with a land frontier of some thousands of miles, it will be understood that an army representing a proportion of one soldier to fifteen hundred inhabitants is certainly not too large for its purpose. Remember, too, that the Native Army, as well as the British, is an army of occupation. Defence against foreign foes is not its only rôle. It is also an instrument of the *Pax Britannica* within India itself. These are fairly obvious considerations, but in addition to them there is a politico-financial argument of much force. If the Indian Army is a reserve to be drawn upon at will, then the contention that India is taxed with an unnecessary military burden is correct. Either the Indian Army is required exclusively for the defence and the maintenance of peace in India—in which

*The Indian  
Army for  
India.*



case India alone should pay for it—or it is maintained as well for the general defence of the British Empire—in which case there should be a liberal readjustment of the military charges between India and Great Britain. Referring to the China and South African contingents Lord Curzon closed his speech on the Indian Budget in the Legislative Council on the 26th of March, 1902, as follows: "It has been the constant duty of the Government of India to balance the Imperial and Indian aspects of our obligations. If we have been helpful to the Empire without detriment to the true interests of this country, then I am sure there is no one who will not be willing to endorse, even to share, our responsibility. We do not go upon our knees to supplicate for favours in return, but we beg that the part played by India in the Imperial system and the services rendered by us in the time of trouble may not be forgotten by the British nation, and that they may find in it, when occasion arises, good grounds for reciprocal generosity and help." These words are evidently something more than a graceful peroration. Lord Curzon can only have meant that if Great Britain is to continue to use India as a *dépôt* whence she may draw troops, either European or native, whenever an extra strain is put upon her military capacity, she ought to help to pay for the maintenance of the Indian Army at such a point that men may safely be spared for foreign service. The existing policy of depleting the Indian garrison for operations outside India is both unfair and imprudent; the only way in which it could be carried out justly and safely would be to increase the army to a point at which it would be capable of meeting any extraordinary demand without risk to India itself and to charge the extra cost to the Home Government.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Indian Expenditure Commission has now laid down the geographical areas within which India has a "direct," "exclusive" or "partial" political interest, with the view of adjusting the financial liabilities of the Indian Government to military expenditure in those areas. This is a necessary step; still, it does not dispose of the objection that an army which may be called upon at any time for service in East Africa or Northern China can hardly be said not to be maintained for purposes other than the defence of India.

## CHAPTER VI

### INDIA'S FOREIGN POLITICS

IT has already been stated that the foreign affairs of India are controlled by the Foreign Department, over which the Viceroy himself presides. They include (1) relations with Native States; (2) relations with Afghanistan and the control of the frontier tribes from the north of Kashmir to the coast of Mekran; (3) British interests in Persia, and especially in the Persian Gulf; (4) affairs on the Eastern Frontier, where India touches China, French Indo-China, and Siam. India is also directly interested in all that occurs in the Red Sea; its outpost of Aden brings it into contact with the Turkish Empire; while the Indian Government must keep in touch with Tibet and Chinese Turkestan. The officers of the Foreign Department are almost always Indian Civilians or members of the commissioned ranks of the Indian Army, and they are called Political Officers, the word "political" in India being generally restricted to external politics. Most of them are employed in connection with Native States, but they are also found in different capacities and under various names on the shores of the Persian Gulf and all along the frontiers of India from the Shan States on the east to Baluchistan and the Persian province of Seistan on the west. The subject of the relations with Native States demands separate treatment. I do not propose to deal with it in these pages. This chapter must be confined to a brief account of the external affairs of the Indian Empire, and for that purpose

it may conveniently be divided into three heads : (a) the North-West Frontier and Afghanistan ; (b) Persia and the Persian Gulf ; (c) the North-East Frontier.

*The North-West Frontier and Afghanistan.*

It was pointed out in the first chapter that the North-West Frontier of India is a zone of mountainous country, and not a boundary line. If you take a good up-to-date map of India you will see that that zone is like a broad river, with its head in the Muztagh Range, where the three empires of India, Russia, and China may be said to meet. Between the Hindu Kush and the boundary of Kashmir it opens out to a breadth of about 150 miles as the crow flies, taking in the whole of Swat and the tribal country round Chitral. Then it suddenly narrows until only the length of the Khyber (some eighteen miles) divides India from Afghanistan. Indeed, seeing that the Khyber is in British occupation it would be correct to say that there is no distance at all between the two countries at this point. But to preserve the simile we may regard the Khyber and the longer passes to the south, the Kuram and the Gomal, which are also occupied by the Indian Government, as bridges spanning this imaginary river of frontier country. Through the Orakzai and Waziri country our "river" still flows between somewhat contracted banks, but once past the Gomal it begins to broaden out. British Baluchistan juts out from the further bank, and it is connected with India proper by a line of railway which leaves Sind at the old frontier station of Jacobabad. Beyond this point the "river" enters Kalat, and then empties itself, so to speak, into the wide lake of Southern Baluchistan and Mekran. It is only of late years that this zone has become so well defined throughout its length of 1,200 miles from Gilgit to the sea. Not only was its further limit for the most part very vague, but large parts of the zone did not exist. It has been built up piece by piece, until now it runs like a broad and impregnable rampart along the whole length of the North-West Frontier of India. Even now, however, the rampart is much stronger

*The Frontier  
Zone.*

in some places than at others. Up to the Gomal pass we hold the frontier in subjection, by virtue of commanding the back-door, or rather the back-doors, of the Baluch tribes into Afghanistan. But between the Gomal and the Tochi Valley comes the country of the Waziris, perhaps the most evil-disposed and uncontrollable of all the turbulent tribes that people the frontier. One section of these Waziris, the Mahsuds, were blockaded by the Indian Government as recently as 1901-1902 in order to obtain restitution for their repeated raids and outrages upon British territory and subjects. The blockade lasted for over a year and necessitated the employment of some 20,000 troops. Even while it was in progress the Mahsuds succeeded several times in repeating the offences for which they were being punished. But the object of the blockade, the exaction of a fine of Rs.100,000, being ostensibly attained, the Government of India was able to withdraw its troops. The whole affair, however, exposed the weakness of our control over that portion of the border—a state of things in strong contrast with that prevailing in Baluchistan. But despite these differences in the strength of the frontier-belt it is at any rate continuous. There is now no break in the zone. In 1893 a Commission under Sir Mortimer Durand, in concert with the Amir's agents, demarcated the boundary of Afghanistan, with the exception of a small part in the Mohmand country, where a Commission is now engaged in defining the border. The boundary thus demarcated marks the other side of the frontier-zone, now no longer an ill-defined jumble of mountains, but a clearly outlined rampart between India and Afghanistan.

The fact that this zone has been clearly demarcated on its further side implies that the intervening country is no longer a *terra incognita*. This is so to a very large extent, though with a frontier of 1,200 miles, which has taken half a century and more to put together, some parts are necessarily much more familiar to us than others. It was not until the Terah campaign of 1896, for example, that our surveyors succeeded in lifting the curtain that hid the hills of Terah, the Tochi,

*Knowledge and Power.*

Mohmand, Swat, and Buner, which previously for the most part had been represented by blank spaces on the map. Now, however, our knowledge of these wild marches and the wilder people that inhabit them is sufficiently extensive. Knowledge, it is said, is power, at any rate power cannot be exerted unless you know how and where to apply it; and during the fifty or sixty years of our dealings with this border country our power over it has grown step by step with our knowledge. For many years we knew nothing, and were content in our ignorance. The terrible experience of the first Afghan war might well have been enough to create a deep distaste for all trans-frontier adventure, apart from the fact that we were still busy extending our territories in India itself; while less than ten years after the annexation of the Punjab we were called upon to vindicate our dominion in Hindustan. These circumstances are sufficient to account for the adoption of that "close-border policy" of which John Lawrence was the great exponent. As time went on, however, the danger of that system was seen to outweigh its apparent conveniences. It was all very well for the Indian Government to draw a line on the map a little west of the Indus, and say, "Thus far and no farther." They might impose that limit upon themselves, but it was impossible to make the frontier tribes toe the line also. Without a chain of fortresses and an army of defenders, how could this "close" border be preserved from violation by the swift raids of the tribesmen? Attack is nearly always the best form of defence, and the only way to keep the frontier intact and to inspire our restless neighbours with a proper respect for the *Pax Britannica* was to stretch out the long arm of the Sirkar over their savage highlands, to keep hanging over them a sword of retribution always ready to fall in swift and satisfying vengeance upon disturbers of the peace.

Gradually, tentatively and not without distrust, the close-border system was abandoned in favour of a forward policy.

*The Forward  
Policy.*

It was first applied along the Dera Ghazi Khan portion of the frontier by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Sandeman, whose whole official career was devoted to the work of taming the Baluch hill-men and



steadily roping them in within the pale of British authority. The comparatively peaceful condition of the Baluch border to-day, from Las Bela to the Gomal (a distance of 500 miles or more), and the existence of British Baluchistan—the *point d'appui* whence we could pour troops upon Kandahar and command the commercial route between India and Persia—are a monument to his labours, and a convincing testimony to the success of the forward policy.<sup>1</sup> There was a strategical as well as a political reason for pushing in amongst the hill-tribes and occupying the best points of vantage in their midst and in their rear. The political argument has already been vindicated by the results of this policy—the retreat of the tribes being cut off, they have become much more amenable to discipline, and the constant and costly expeditions that once were the rule are now a rare exception. The strategical argument has yet to be tested. When the invader descends upon India he will find us ready for him on his side of the passes. We shall not, as under the old border system, be waiting at the foot of the hills for the enemy to roll down upon us. It is an accepted principle in strategy that a series of mountain ranges is not in itself a sufficient defence. Positions must be occupied at the outer ends of the passes, the passes themselves must be defended, and lateral communications must be maintained between them. This has been achieved on the North-West Frontier of India; from Chitral to New Chaman, it may be said, the muzzles of our guns overhang the boundary of Afghanistan, while from the latter place the railway could be extended in six weeks to Kandahar.

Such is the effect of the forward policy on the North-West of India; yet even to-day, when Indian frontier affairs are under discussion, you may hear people talking as if that policy were still on its trial, while every untoward event is regarded in certain quarters as a proof of its failure. The great frontier rising of 1896–97, when the Indian Government was as near being defeated by the tribesmen as it has ever been, was accepted by many people at Home as a

<sup>1</sup> See "The Forward Policy and Its Results," by R. I. Bruce (Longmans).



crushing demonstration of the evil of an aggressive policy on the frontier. As a matter of fact that event demonstrated nothing so forcibly as the extreme danger of unpreparedness and ignorance. If our Intelligence Department had been better served, if we had been in a position to forestall the machinations which had their root in Kabul, it is probable that the conflagration which spread along so many hundred miles of the border might have been checked at the outset. I have already said that the campaign was conducted over country which up till then was largely unknown to us. That fact alone indicates that there was more than one thing lacking on our side, and that the policy responsible for the great extent and prolongation of hostilities was not a forward, but a backward policy.

The term "forward policy" is usually supposed to be merely a synonym for military aggression. The bad odour with which it is often invested is derived from the idea that a "military party" exists in India with insatiable aspirations towards expansion. This *The Alleged Military Party.* "military party" is a phantom. If aspirations for unlimited expansion are cherished by a few individuals, they carry no weight whatever, and in any case cannot be called a policy. In this connection the words of Colonel A. Durand, in his work "The Making of a Frontier," are very pertinent: "There is a certain school which is never tired of accusing soldiers and political officers on the frontier of stirring up strife, out of a desire to extend the limits of our power at any cost, and to snatch personal distinction from the resulting war. If these critics had ever commanded even in the smallest expedition, they would understand the terrible responsibility which weighs on a leader, not alone on account of the hundreds of lives depending on his judgment, but from the fact that the honour of his country's arms, and its good name for truth and honesty, are in his hands. Had they once felt what this means they would be less free with their unworthy imputations. If there are responsible English gentlemen who would plunge their country into the smallest war *le cœur léger* for the pure lust of conquest, or for the sake of

their own paltry personal ambition, I thank God that I have not met them. Such men must be few and far between." That is the testimony of a man of action, a soldier and "political" who has lived and worked on the outer bounds of the Empire. I will add to it the evidence of an administrator—Sir Edwin Collen, late military member of the Viceroy's Council—who, in the *Empire Review* for November, 1901, wrote as follows: "It has sometimes been alleged that there is a military party in India, eager for active service and its rewards, which is ever aiming at advance beyond the frontier and its consequence, and that to this party the increased military expenditure and preparation are due. After a long experience of Indian administration I can safely affirm that this idea has no substance in fact. The supreme military authorities—the Commander-in-Chief and Military Member of Council—are not among those who reap the rewards of active service. Military expeditions and military preparations merely cause an increase to their ordinary labours and responsibilities, which are already sufficiently heavy, while it is absurd to suppose that the eminent and prudent statesmen who have governed India would be led away by the temptations of military renown or weakly yield to pressure from their military colleagues."

So much for the alleged "military party." As it has no real existence, so the vague aspirations for expansion which are wrongly supposed to constitute the forward policy have no place in the counsels of the Indian Government. The forward policy is no longer a moot question. Practical men have ceased to discuss it, just as they have given up arguing about evolution and the shape of the earth. It is a *chose jugée*. It has abundantly justified itself, and its results are now seen in a secure and, generally speaking, peaceful frontier—a condition that was unattainable and, indeed, not hoped for, under the old close-border system. We hold Afghanistan, as it were, in the hollow of our hand, while our occupation of Chitral and Gilgit (which latter place is connected with Kashmir, and so with India, by a fine

*Withdrawal  
of Regular  
Garrisons.*

military road) precludes the possibility of Russia's turning our northern flank. All this having been attained, it is now possible to reduce the military expenditure upon the defence of the border, by withdrawing regular garrisons from many of the outlying posts and substituting for them bodies of tribal militia. This change has already produced gratifying results. In itself it is a testimony to the success of the forward policy, although it has been ignorantly hailed in certain quarters as a reversal of that system. On the contrary, it is a perfectly natural development of a policy of going in amongst the tribes, securing first their respect and then their confidence, occupying strategic points in their midst, and connecting those points with each other and with our bases on the hither side of the frontier. The experiment of entrusting the tribesmen with the defence of their own country is undoubtedly a bold one. Nevertheless it has so far fulfilled the most sanguine expectations. The militia corps, under a handful of picked English officers, have attained a considerable degree of efficiency, and they are eminently popular with the tribesmen. An essential feature of this new frontier policy is the extension of the Indian railway system to points within the frontier zone. Thus the main line of the Indian North-Western Railway has been extended to Jamrud, at the mouth of the Khyber Pass; Dargai, at the opening of the Malakand Pass (through which our forces march to the distant outpost of Chitral), is now connected by a light railway with Nowshera, a large military cantonment and station on the main railway system. Similarly the Kuram Valley is brought into touch with the outside world by a light railway from Kushalgarh (on the North-Western line) through Kohat (an important cantonment) to Thal.

Until 1901 frontier affairs were under the purview of the Punjab Government, but in that year a new province was created out of the districts of Peshawar, Hazara, Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ghazi Khan. This change had been contemplated for many years. It was first mooted in the days of Lord Lytton, but it remained for Lord Curzon to achieve it.

*The New Frontier Province.*

From an administrative standpoint this is a most important development of the forward policy. By concentrating the management of frontier affairs under an Agent to the Governor-General at Peshawar, it brings them into closer touch with the Government of India, and relieves the Punjab Government of a burden which had grown too great to be easily carried.

A definite stage has now been reached in the building of the frontier, and thus the Government are able to call a halt and to devote attention to the consolidation of their administrative position on the near side of the border. There is now no part of the frontier that is not clearly demarcated, and which the surveyor has not penetrated with his compass and his plane-table. Peace prevails from the Hindu Kush to the Arabian Sea, and India lies secure behind her ramparts, knowing that they are well defended at every assailable point. But this happy state of things depends upon the wisdom, the strength of will, and to some extent upon the luck, of a single man. So long as the Amir of Afghanistan remains friendly to the British, rules his kingdom with prudence and firmness, and meets with reasonable good fortune, this definite stage in frontier evolution will continue. So far Habibulla Khan has acquitted himself tolerably well. When his father, Abdurrahman, died in October, 1901, the eyes of India were turned towards Kabul in anxiety. People had been saying for years that as soon as the breath had left the body of the old Amir, Afghanistan would be in a blaze from the Helmund to the Pamirs. There were at least two outside claimants to the throne—Ishak Khan, now an old man and an exile in Russian territory, and Omar Khan, Abdurrahman's youngest son, whose mother is supposed to be a woman of great courage and strength of mind. It was anticipated that Ishak Khan would raise his standard in the north, while a *coup d'état* would probably be attempted at Kabul on behalf of Omar. At the same time the removal of Abdurrahman's ferocious authority would bring all the lawless elements of the population to the front; England would be compelled to intervene on behalf of Habibulla,



the presence of a British Army at Kabul would give Russia her long awaited pretext for the seizure of Herat, and after that, the deluge. It may be still too early to say that all of these anticipations have been entirely falsified. It is known that Habibulla is less daring and less cruel than his father, and to that extent not so well fitted to maintain his authority over a congeries of rival tribes and kindreds. His overtures of friendliness towards the Hadda Mullah, that turbulent priest (now happily deceased), who was at the bottom of most of our troubles on the frontier eight years ago, were not regarded with approval in India ; for nothing is less desirable than that the Amir should fall under sacerdotal influence, which throughout Islam is the bitter foe of Great Britain. But he is popular with the army, he is no novice in affairs (for his father shared with him for some years the internal administration of the country), and, while he lacks Abdurrahman's fearlessness and ferocity, he is believed to be endowed with a large measure of common sense.

Thus the outlook in Afghanistan gives no immediate cause for apprehension. While Habibulla continues to enforce his authority, and while the two pretenders to the throne remain inactive, the prospect will continue to be satisfactory. The late Amir, however, secured peace and quietness, and maintained it for many years, only by dint of ruthless exercise of power. His was the policy of making a solitude and calling it peace. Tribes that would not be cowed were butchered into submission ; individual disturbers of the peace were killed without mercy ; while thieves and minor criminals were mutilated after the most approved methods of Asiatic barbarism. In his time the way of transgressors was hard indeed. His plan succeeded because it was never relaxed. Capriciousness was foreign to his nature. He never wearied in well-doing, and so the truculent and war-loving tribes that compose what we call Afghanistan sullenly subsided until the tyranny was overpast. Habibulla has been on the throne for three years without any mishap, but it still remains to be seen whether he will always be able to maintain the peace

*Risks to be  
Reckoned.*

that his father forced upon the people. The possibility of Habibulla's growing overtly or covertly unfriendly to the British Government must also be reckoned. It is well known that his father felt no affection for the Government that had placed him on the throne and supported him morally and financially throughout his reign. If Abdurrahman was without gratitude to the British, it is not to be supposed that that sentiment has spontaneously sprung up in the bosom of his son. Thus we have to rely only upon his intelligence as the safeguard of his friendship towards us.

Habibulla's gratitude might indeed be secured by granting him the distinction coveted in vain by his father—direct

*The Ultimate  
Solution.*

representation by a Minister in London. It

must be supposed that the Government of India

had substantial reasons for their refusal of this

boon to the late Amir, but when the question is again put forward (as it undoubtedly will be), it may perhaps be found that the conditions which formerly rendered it impracticable will have altered sufficiently to admit of its favourable consideration. But the possibilities of the situation on the North-West Frontier all point to the same conclusion—namely, that finality has not yet been reached. To return to our simile of the river—the opposite bank of the river may be breached by at least three different causes, one of which involves the possibility of our having to break it down and overstep it ourselves. No doubt the ultimate fate of Afghanistan is absorption by Russia on one side and India on the other. Some day the two Empires will march side by side along the Hindu Kush and the Hazara highlands to Khorasan. Sir T. H. Holdich, in his book "The Indian Borderland" (Methuen), says that this development is expected with approval by many Afghans. "Traders and merchants," he says, "and, as a rule, the Persian-speaking races of the Shiah sect, Kijzilbashies and Hazaras, would probably welcome British rule. And there are others, whom it is not necessary to specify, who have frankly asked me when the British are coming, and who made it clear that the thought of their minds was, the sooner the better." Nevertheless the Indian Government will do nothing to



hasten that consummation, but a secure and comparatively settled frontier places them in a favourable position to strike when the necessity is forced upon them. There are those who contend that the Government should press for the opening up of Afghanistan by railway and telegraph, and for the training of the Amir's army by British officers. It would have been worse than useless to hint at either of these proposals to Abdurrahman, even had the Indian Government seriously entertained them. As to the second suggestion, it may be observed that at a time when the Indian Army itself is said to be seriously short of British officers, the proposal to press them upon the Amir's forces is not very practical. There is more to be said for the first, though no one can pretend that a railway to Kabul would ever pay its way. There is one measure perfectly feasible and eminently prudent which might be considered by the Government of India, and that is, to secure the right to station intelligence officers on the northern frontier of Afghanistan. There is no doubt that our intelligence as to Russian movements on that frontier is capable of improvement, and the presence there of British agents would be useful in more respects than one. But the present policy in regard to Afghanistan is essentially one of caution and letting sleeping dogs lie, and this, for a time at least, is the only reasonable policy. It is needless to hurry up the inevitable. The truest wisdom is simply to be prepared for it, and at least it cannot be said that the British Government is altogether unready.

### *Persia and the Persian Gulf.*

The subject of British relations with and interests in Persia is large and complicated. It involves commercial as well as political considerations, and inasmuch as several Powers are concerned it is not, like the future of Afghanistan, a question of purely Asiatic importance. Unlike Afghanistan, also, Persia is nominally an independent Power. True, only the shadows of her former greatness remain, but even they are sufficient to invest her with a certain prestige. She exchanges ministers

*Persia's  
Importance.*

with the great Courts of Europe, and she stands ostensibly on equal terms with the Powers who are marking her down as their prey. Her geographical position is such that her fate is of the utmost consequence to at least three European Governments. Not only does Persia lie on the flank of India, but she interposes between Russia and the open sea. The projected German railway from the Mediterranean to Bagdad will run through Turkish territory, but it will convert the Gulf from a marine *cul de sac* into an artery of world-commerce rivalling the Suez Canal; while it is certain to form a base for a system of railways across Persia by which India will one day be linked continuously with Europe. Internally Persia is capable of great industrial and commercial development. Her population of some nine or ten millions is very small in proportion to the size of the country, even allowing for the vast areas of desert which Persia contains. Her agricultural potentialities are considerable, but her mineral deposits are more likely to attract the European exploiter, and these are known to be very large. Lead and copper mines have been worked from time immemorial; there are said to be immense deposits of iron ore and great seams of coal near the southern sea-board which are not worked. In the west naphtha has been tapped and is supposed to be producible throughout a great tract of country from the northern highlands to the Persian Gulf. All this wealth remains undeveloped and largely unrealised for the lack of communications. The roads in Persia are probably worse than in any other country boasting an equal degree of civilisation, and the Karun is the only navigable river. But with the construction of railways Persia will become not only a highway but a treasure-house of the nations, and in both capacities it will have an important political influence upon the interests of India. Such a consummation is yet a long way ahead. Apart from the complete backwardness of Persia herself, the policy of Russia in regard to her industrial development is frankly obstructive. We are now in the second decade of a period during which Persia has bound herself to the Government of the Tsar not to permit the construction of

any railways by other than Russian subjects. When Great Britain in 1889 obtained the Shah's assent to the opening of the Karun river to navigation, this was Russia's counter-move to what she considered to be a dangerous concession to British commercial designs in Persia. This self-denying ordinance on the part of the Shah first ran for a term of ten years; but the St. Petersburg Government were so pleased with an arrangement placing the emancipation of Persia entirely at their mercy, that they succeeded in securing the signature of the agreement for a further ten years. This piece of byplay in the game between the two great Asiatic Powers is highly characteristic. Great Britain opens a water-way to the world's navigation: Russia puts an extinguisher for twenty years upon the development of a country rich in untapped wealth. It is the same throughout Asia. Wherever England opens a door, Russia closes one somewhere else. This is the Muscovite conception of pursuing "a great civilising mission."

Russia is the sole creditor of the Shah's Govern-  
*Russia, Britain,* ment, and by virtue of this relationship she  
*and Germany.* controls all the inland customs of Persia—a  
 very useful form of security to a Government  
 which is fighting tooth and nail for commercial ascen-  
 dancy. She is, as we have seen, mistress of the  
 situation so far as the opening up of the country is  
 concerned. Politically and strategically she largely over-  
 shadows the land of the Lion and the Sun. During  
 the past hundred years Russia has swallowed large slices of  
 Persian territory. The provinces of Georgia, Imeritia,  
 Mingrelia, Persian Daghestan, Shirvan, Ganjeh, Karabagh,  
 Erivan, Nakchivan, and parts of Talish have been added to  
 the Tsar's dominions. Khorasan will probably be the next  
 to follow, in which event Western Afghanistan can hardly  
 fail to find its way into the Russian maw. Russia's position  
 along the whole of the northern border of Persia is over-  
 whelming.<sup>1</sup> Internally, her prestige overshadows the  
 whole situation. Evidence of her power is always before

<sup>1</sup> See "Persia," by G. N. Curzon, vol. ii.

the eyes of the Persians in the so-called Cossack regiments maintained at Teheran under Russian officers. "In the event of political convulsions," says Lord Curzon, "it is doubtful whether these regiments would not prefer the country of their uniform to the country of their birth." Consuls and consul-generals each with his Cossack guard are scattered all over Persia, all of them being living witnesses to the might of Russia. Throughout the whole of Northern Persia, Russia's influence is supreme and undisputed, and so far as outward show goes it is by no means a negligible quantity in the South. Confronting Russia, though not with as bold and confident a mien as could be wished, is Great Britain. Her sphere of interest in Persia consists of the southern provinces, while her gunboats patrol the Persian Gulf from the Strait of Ormuz to the Shat el Arab. Should Germany accomplish her scheme of a railway to Bagdad, she would occupy a flank position, from which she would be able to cut into the commercial monopoly of Russia in Northern and of England in Southern Persia. If she secured a port on the Gulf she would acquire a political status in Western Asia which would appreciably alter the balance of power in that part of the world. It is not a gratifying reflection that the British attitude towards Germany's project is still uncertain and ill-defined. The hurried withdrawal from participation in the Bagdad scheme in the spring of 1903 was forced, by public feeling, upon a Government which hardly seemed to have appreciated the far-reaching importance of the step which it contemplated. In this instance public opinion was probably right, but it is not to be supposed that the doom of the Bagdad railway scheme was settled when the British Government withdrew from it. It will certainly be revived, and it is important that Great Britain should decide beforehand what her attitude towards the project will be.

From the point of view of this book the only consideration of importance is the effect of any alteration in the *status quo* in Persia and the Gulf upon India. There are two views as to the course that events are likely and ought to take in Western Asia. One is Russian, the other is British.



The Russian view, which is patient and long-sighted, is that Persia is doomed to absorption, and that the Russian flag will one day float along the southern coast of Persia as it now floats over her ancient provinces in the north. The British view, which refuses to concern itself with to-morrow and is apathetic even in regard to the affairs of to-day, is that the *status quo* must be maintained in Persia. That is a reasonable view so far as it goes. Until recently it appeared as though it had not advanced beyond the stage of a pious opinion, but in the House of Commons Lord Cranborne has enunciated it as a principle. That is a great step gained, but something is still needed to translate that principle into a definite policy. While we are determined to maintain the *status quo* we must recognise how far its probable, if not inevitable, modification is beyond our control. Russia for the last hundred years has been pressing like a glacier on the north of Persia. She has already swallowed whole provinces which formerly owned the Shah's dominion, and it is difficult to believe that the process will not continue. The next convulsion in Afghanistan will almost certainly throw Herat into Russia's hands. The Perso-Afghan boundary is purely arbitrary, and there would be practically nothing to prevent Russia from wiping it out and taking, sooner or later, the whole of Khorasan. The common belief is that this operation will take the opposite course, that Meshed will be the stepping-stone to Herat; the result would be the same in either case. After Khorasan, the rest of Northern Persia will follow. England can, and probably will, do much to delay this process of absorption. That she will prevent it altogether seems very doubtful.

In any case, the day is past for a policy directed towards the entire subversion of Russia's interests in the North, or the undermining of her legitimate influence with the Teheran Government. The only practical course now to be adopted, as Mr. Valentine Chirol points out in the "Middle Eastern Question" (Murray, 1903) is to concentrate every effort upon restoring the balance of power in Persia.



The rise of Japan necessarily introduces a factor into the Asiatic situation which must materially affect all our calculations in regard to the future expansion of Russia. But Japan, though far from being a negligible is still an uncertain quantity, at least in relation to the problem of the Middle East.

*Japan and the  
Middle Eastern  
Question.*

During the first few months of her war with Russia she has indeed elevated her prestige to a height that has astonished even her most sanguine friends, while that of her enemy has been proportionately depressed. But it would be vain to speculate minutely upon the political results of a struggle still undecided. It is safe to say, however, that, even if defeated, Russia cannot be crushed by Japan. To impose a *pax* upon Asia is a task beyond the capacity of the island empire. Defeat in the Far East would undoubtedly react unfavourably upon Russia's position elsewhere, but there is no guarantee that such reaction would ensure tranquillity. A few years ago it was usual in certain quarters to deprecate opposition to Russia's designs in Persia, lest she should thereby be irritated into further aggression in the Far East. If that argument had any force then, it should be capable of a converse application now. Those who were afraid of checking Russia in one direction lest she should grow dangerous in another, ought to view the prospect in the Middle East with grave concern in the event of Japan's complete success in Manchuria and Korea. But, whatever may be the effect of the Russo-Japanese War upon the situation in Mid-Asia, it can only modify, it cannot revolutionise, that situation. Russia, beaten by Japan, might appear much less formidable than before ; or her very defeat might drive her to anticipate what she has always cherished as her destiny in Mid-Asia. Whichever the result, Russia and England will continue to confront each other in Persia, and unless the former entirely abandons ambitions unswervingly pursued for the greater part of a century, the problem to be solved between them will still retain its essential features.

The immediate task for Great Britain is not so much the recovery of ground already lost as the prevention of further

inroads upon an ascendancy in Southern Persia and the Gulf, acquired by a century of effort. I do not propose to discuss the methods by which that ascendancy may be maintained. It must suffice to point out very briefly why it is the duty of Great Britain to secure that the *status quo* in Persia shall not become a thin disguise for complete Russian domination. So long as we are responsible for India, it is incumbent upon us to check every encroachment upon those spheres of commercial expansion in which India is naturally entitled to a principal share. But it behoves us still more to prevent developments likely to place India at a serious strategic disadvantage. It is not necessary to have a lively faith in the so-called "bogey of Russian invasion," to believe that it is of vital importance to India that Russia should be prevented from establishing herself at any point or in any degree of strength on India's western flank. Whether or not, "the Tartar impulse of rolling down upon the prizes of Asia"—in other words, the Russian ambition to obtain the mastery of India<sup>1</sup>—is ever likely to prove a factor in practical politics, is beside the point. What must be remembered is that the mere presence of Russia within striking distance of India would gravely complicate the problem of Indian defence, and so add to the sufficiently heavy burden of the Indian taxpayer. The argument, frequently urged in influential quarters, that Russia may safely be given an entirely free hand in Persia because she would gain nothing by the invasion of India, is too puerile to require serious refutation. Russia's private views as to the wisdom of attempting the conquest of India would certainly not deter her from taking full advantage of a position enabling her to threaten, not necessarily invasion, but trouble of any sort on India's flank.

### *The North-Eastern Frontier.*

The reasons against complacency with Russian designs in Persia apply with equal force to her intrigues in Tibet.

<sup>1</sup> See a striking article on Russia and India in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1902.

St. Petersburg has never explicitly admitted any attempt, or even desire, to establish a political influence at Lhasa, Nevertheless it is clear that the Government of India is fully persuaded that Russia has been pursuing a definite plan of drawing Tibet under her ægis. The pretext of the expedition to the Chumbi Valley (which has now penetrated to Lhasa itself) was the Lamas' persistent evasion of meeting a diplomatic mission from the Government of India to discuss the failure of their people to abide by engagements into which they had entered with the Indian Government. But the real motives of this deliberate departure from a settled policy of non-interference with Tibet spring from causes less obvious and more grave.

The "Papers Relating to Tibet," presented to Parliament during the present year, make it quite plain that both the British Foreign Office and the Government of India were seriously exercised over the unmistakable indications of attempts to tamper with the *status quo* at Lhasa. It was sufficiently exasperating for the Government of India to have its boundary pillars destroyed, its political officers ignored, and its letters to the Dalai Lama returned unopened. These insults, however, might still have been borne with patience, were it not that the Lamas, while rigorously maintaining their policy of isolation on the side of India, were exchanging missions and presents with St. Petersburg. In September, 1902, Lord Lansdowne felt it necessary to warn the Chinese Government (the nominal suzerain of Tibet) against the conclusion of any agreement favouring a Russian protectorate of the Hermit State; and in the following February he protested to the Russian ambassador against the minatory tone of a memorandum relating to reports of an intended British expedition into Tibetan territory. Lord Lansdowne reminded Count Benckendorff that Lhasa is within a comparatively short distance of the northern frontier of India, but considerably over a thousand miles distant from the Asiatic possessions of Russia. He added that "any sudden display of Russian interest or activity in the regions immediately adjoining the

possessions of Great Britain could scarcely fail . . . to create the impression that British influence was receding, and that of Russia making rapid advances into regions which had hitherto been regarded as altogether outside her sphere of influence."

In their dispatch of the 8th of January, 1903, the Government of India roundly declared their belief in "the existence of an arrangement of some sort between Russia and Tibet," and they pointed out that the Tibetan question was thereby invested with a far more than local importance. The matter which they were concerned to examine was "not the mere settlement of a border dispute, or even the amelioration of our future trading relations with Tibet, but the question of our entire future political relations with that country, and the degree to which we can permit the influence of another great Power to be exercised for the first time in Tibetan affairs."

These extracts make it clear that those best able to judge of the situation were convinced that the time had come to insist upon a settling of accounts with Tibet. No unprejudiced mind could fail to be persuaded by the Blue Book in which they occur that the Government of India was sincerely convinced of the urgent necessity of asserting (by force if need were) its claim to be heard and treated with common courtesy by the authorities of Lhasa. When it is remembered that the whole trend of Lord Curzon's policy has lain in the direction of peace and retrenchment it will be understood that this marked departure therefrom must have been dictated by the most urgent considerations.

It must be admitted that the Indian Government has entered upon an undertaking from which it cannot expect any but negative advantages. It may be questioned whether, if all that is now known of what an expedition to Lhasa involves had been clearly realised in advance, the project would have been urged with quite the same degree of peremptoriness. The experience of General Macdonald's force has substantially modified the ideas held before his advance to Gyantse. Instead of a

*The Advance  
to Lhasa.*



people of cowards, it has found the Tibetans capable of a stubborn bravery which only falls short of heroism by reason of a ludicrous element, inseparable in the modern mind from warfare waged with spears and gingals on one side, and the armaments of the twentieth century on the other. Instead of an open country between the passes and Lhasa, the expedition has had to march and fight over some of the most dangerous and difficult mountain country in the world. These disagreeable actualities accord ill with the assurance of the Indian Government in their despatch of January, 1903, that "the military strength of the Tibetans is beneath contempt, and that serious resistance is not to be contemplated." Moreover, they compel one to ask how it is that it has been reserved for a military force, fighting the greater part of its way, to enlighten the Indian Government upon the true character of the country through which they advanced.

These, however, are considerations which do not essentially affect the question of our political relations with Tibet. The policy which has dictated an armed invasion of the Lamas' territory is the policy of preventing, in the words of Lord Curzon, "rival and unfriendly influences" from creeping up to the natural defences of the Indian Empire "and lodging themselves right under our walls." To allow Russia to establish any sort of ascendancy at Lhasa would be to admit her to a position overhanging Bengal, and perilously close to Nepaul, which supplies the Indian Army with its Ghurka battalions. Only the most culpable apathy could blind the Indian Government to the danger of giving such an opening to a Power so rich in the resources of intrigue and so apt in their employment.

The fact that no such risks complicate Indian frontier affairs further east render them a source of much less anxiety. The recent Anglo-French agreement is considered to have removed Siam from the category of dangerous questions, while there is no ground for apprehension from our contiguity (in Upper Burma) to the Chinese Empire. If our position at the back door of China carries little responsibility, it does not as yet

*The Back Door  
of China.*



confer any distinct advantage. It has often been urged that the British Government should push forward the railway system of Burma into Yunnan, so as to tap the immense resources of the Yang-tse valley, and make Rangoon the outlet for the trade of South-Western China. Another favourite project is to construct a railway from Assam into China, which would give us direct rail communication between, say, I-Chang (and ultimately Shanghai) and Bombay. If an English line were built through Southern Persia from Bagdad and joined on to the Indian system, a zone of railways would thus be created across the face of Southern Asia, rendering the commercial nations quite independent of Russia. These proposals can be very attractive on paper. Their practical value, however, is doubtful. The commercial prospects of a railway from Yunnan through Burma are not sufficiently certain to justify the Government of India in undertaking such a scheme. Indeed, Lord Curzon in a speech at Rangoon in December, 1901, ridiculed the idea altogether, declaring that the whole of the traffic between Burma and China across the Salween River could be carried in a couple of dug-outs. As to the second and more ambitious project, it is understood that the engineering difficulties would be so enormous that the railway could not pay its initial cost for many years. But apart from trading or engineering feasibilities, no such schemes are likely to be entertained by the Government of India, which desires nothing but to be left to rest on its North-Eastern Frontier. It does not want more territory, and though more trade would always be welcome, it cannot afford to gamble for it by costly railway undertakings. Both Upper Burma and Assam, though full of great potentialities, are in a very backward condition, and the first business of the Government of India is to see to their internal development by creating and improving communications, and by supplying them with population from the overcrowded tracts of India proper.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE COST

HAVING learnt something of what the government, the defence, and the external relations of India involve, we may now pass on to see how the whole thing is paid for. The totals of revenue and expenditure for the last four years are as follows :—

1900-1901					
					£
Revenue ...	...	...	...	...	75,272,291
Expenditure...	...	...	...	...	73,602,087
Surplus	...	...	...	...	1,670,204
1901-1902					
					£
Revenue ...	...	...	...	...	75,546,700
Expenditure...	...	...	...	...	71,873,800
Surplus	...	...	...	...	4,672,900
1902-1903					
					£
Revenue ...	...	...	...	...	77,434,915
Expenditure...	...	...	...	...	74,365,366
Surplus	...	...	...	...	3,069,549
1903-1904					
					£
Revenue ...	...	...	...	...	83,067,800
Expenditure...	...	...	...	...	80,356,600
Surplus	...	...	...	...	2,711,200

During the twenty-five years ended 1901-1902 there were surpluses in fifteen years aggregating Rs. 351·32 millions, and deficits in ten years aggregating Rs. 237·83 millions. (These figures relate only to expenditure from revenue, not from borrowed capital). It may be judged from these totals that Indian finance is in a very satisfactory condition. Too much significance, however, must not be attached to these surpluses. The constant recurrence of such large favourable balances has led to the charge that the Indian Government are taxing the country beyond their necessities. The Government have now partially admitted the justice of that complaint. In last year's Budget they remitted eight annas per maund<sup>1</sup> off the salt tax and raised the limit of exemption from income tax from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 per annum. The total loss to revenue by these reductions of taxation amounted last year to £1,220,333; nevertheless the year's accounts showed a total surplus of £2,711,200. The two largest items of expenditure are the Army and the Civil Department. The latter includes the entire cost of administration, and consists chiefly of the salaries of the officials, high and low, of the many departments of government. In India, as in other countries, demands are continually growing for the development of civil administration in all its branches, involving the creation of new departments and the increase of existing staffs. The civil charges amount to perhaps one-fourth of the total expenditure, and the military to about another fourth. The other chief heads of expenditure include the post-office, the telegraphs, the railways, irrigation, the collection of revenue, and the debt services. The principal sources of revenue are the land, forests, opium, salt, stamps, customs, and the commercial services (railways, post-office, irrigation, &c.). But the cost of government and defence is not entirely met out of revenue.

As India's principal creditor England draws large sums of money annually from her great Eastern dependency. Heavy remittances also go home to England in the form of pensions, trade profits, dividends and so forth. It is some-

<sup>1</sup> A maund is equal to about 80 lbs. avoirdupois.

times argued that these payments constitute an annual tribute from India to Great Britain, but it should be noted that India pays for nothing which she does not get. Every country has to pay for its borrowings, whether in the form of public debt or capital for private enterprise, and India cannot expect to be an exception to this rule. The sterling debt of India (held entirely in England) consists of £11,892,207 at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., £45,125,884 at 3 per cent., and £63,247,722 at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The rupee debt (of which Rs. 202·39 millions were held in London) was at the end of 1900-1901 as follows: Rs. 981·5 millions at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., Rs. 110·7 millions at 3 per cent., and Rs. 47·5 millions at 4 per cent. The total interest charge on the rupee debt at the end of 1900-1901 was Rs. 40,058,600, and on the sterling debt £4,158,351. A large proportion both of the sterling and the rupee debt was incurred in connection with the construction of railways and other public works. Considerable additions to the rupee and sterling debt were made in the two years 1896-1897 and 1897-1898 in consequence of famine, plague, war, and the prosecution of railway extension. In the ten years from 1892-1893 to 1901-1902 the disbursements of the Government of India in England amounted to £243,590,951. On the other side Council bills were drawn on Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras to the amount of £155,263,415, and a total sum of £75,865,504 was borrowed in England, both items amounting to £231,128,919. The depreciation of silver places India, with its silver currency, at a great disadvantage. The Government have largely mitigated this disadvantage by closing the mints to the free coinage of silver and fixing the rate of exchange at 15 rupees to the sovereign. Despite many sinister predictions this policy continues successful, but it would be rendered more complete if the Government would guarantee their own securities at the same rate of exchange.

The three principal sources from which the revenue of the Empire is raised are the land, opium, and salt. It is unfortunate that each is the subject of controversy, the first two more particularly. During the last two or three

years there has been more discussion about the land revenue than in all the preceding years of British occupation ; while the opium trade has formed the subject of a Royal Commission, and an influential philanthropic society at Home is still endeavouring to compass its ruin. The excise on salt is not so provocative of acrimonious controversy, but the "iniquitous salt tax" is a convenient and frequently employed missile to fling at the Indian Government. Thus in writing about any of these three things it is very difficult to detach oneself from the controversial *milieu* through which they are invariably treated.

The Government being the supreme landlord in India, it collects rent in the form of "land revenue" from every holding in British India, except those granted revenue free, usually as rewards for faithful service to old soldiers or public servants. The systems of land tenure vary greatly in every province, but there are two main divisions—the *Zemindari*, or landlord system, and the *Ryotwari*, or peasant proprietary system. Under the former the Government collects its revenues from large landowners who rent their estates out to tenants or from brotherhoods whose members hold the land in common ; under the latter there are no landlords, but the revenue is levied directly from the cultivators. The *Zemindari* system prevails principally in the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bengal, the Central Provinces, and large parts of Madras, the *Ryotwari* system in other parts of British India ; but both systems may be found in the same province. Except where (as in Bengal, parts of the United Provinces, and Madras) the revenue was fixed in perpetuity by Lord Cornwallis in 1793, the land revenue is assessed by periodical "settlements," which occur in each district at intervals of twenty or thirty years. Settlement work is obviously of the greatest importance, and every officer of the Civil Service has to go through a period of "settlement training." When a district is under settlement a staff of officials, superior and subordinate, is exclusively engaged upon the work ; and it depends upon their assessment of

Three Chief  
Kinds of  
Revenue.

Land Revenue.



the various holdings whether the revenue to be levied from that district for the following twenty or thirty years will be just or unjust—either to the Government or to the cultivators. Where every field is thus subjected to scrutiny and its capabilities carefully judged, it must needs be that the incidence of the land revenue varies considerably throughout India. But the rate never exceeds 20 per cent. of the gross produce of the soil, and is rarely more than 50 per cent. of the estimated rental. These figures, however, are an extreme limit, within which the proportion of the land revenue to the output of the land varies considerably, according to the capacity of the soil, the climatic conditions, the accessibility to markets and so forth. Indeed it is practically impossible to state any particular figure as representing the proportion of revenue to produce in

*Proportion of  
Revenue to  
Produce.*

India, and it is for this reason that controversy upon the subject is frequently so-unprofitable.

Where it is impossible to obtain absolutely accurate *data*, one's conclusions are always liable to be strongly coloured by one's preconceived ideas. In reply to its critics, the Government of India in January, 1902, issued an exhaustive "Resolution" upon the question of land revenue and its proportion to the agricultural output. In the course of that Resolution the Government pointed out that "there is great practical difficulty in ascertaining what the average produce is. It is dependent upon a number of varying factors, such as the industry and resources of the cultivators, the nature of the crop, the capacity, security and situation of the holding, and the chance of the seasons. The share of the gross produce which a crop can afford to pay must stand in close relation and in inverse proportion to the amount of expenditure which has been required to grow it, and this will vary greatly—for instance, in the case of sugar-cane and of wheat. The truth is that the assessment of land revenue is subject to so many complicated and varying conditions that any attempt to reduce it to an exact mathematical proportion either of gross or of net produce would not only be impracticable, but would lead to the placing of burdens upon the shoulders of the people, from

which under a less rigid system, if sympathetically administered, they are exempt." From this it may fairly be concluded that statistical generalisations as to the ratio of the land revenue to the income of the average ryot are not to be depended upon.

*Land Revenue  
under Native  
Rule.*

The best authorities, however, agree that compared with the system of the most enlightened Hindu and Mahomedan rulers of India in the past, that of the British Raj is remarkably lenient. Under the Emperor Akbar the share of the State in the gross produce of the land was nominally 33 per cent. The Marhattas were never content with less than one-half, the old native rulers in Bengal took 54 per cent., and the Sikh Government in the Punjab considered itself entitled to from 40 to 50 per cent. The effect of the British system is thus stated by Sir John Strachey in his work, "India":—

"Instead of sweeping off the whole of the greater part of the surplus profit of the land, our Government never takes more than a fixed share, which falls at an average rate of from 3 per cent. to 8 per cent. of the gross outturn. In the Punjab, in tracts which are fertile and protected by irrigation, and in which the Sikh Government would have taken not less than 50 per cent., we take less than 17 per cent. In Bombay, the highest assessment on the most productive land is 16 per cent.; the average for the province is 7·6 per cent. Many of the Native States of Bombay have been surveyed and settled on the system adopted by our Government, and their rates are always 10 to 15 per cent. higher than in the British districts. In Madras, the average demand is now 6·3 per cent. . . . In the North-Western Provinces and Oudh the share of the State is now 50 per cent. of the rental, an amount estimated to be equivalent to 7·8 per cent. of the gross produce."

The foregoing figures seem rather more favourable to the British Government than the most recent statistics. The following statement is based upon figures given in the Government Resolution already quoted, and the Report of the Famine Commission, 1901.

#### ZEMINDARI TRACTS.

United Provinces	...	50 per cent. of rental (Oudh 47 per cent.).
Central Provinces	...	between 50 and 75 per cent. of rental.
Orissa	...	52½ per cent. of rental.
Punjab	...	45 per cent. of rental,

## RYOTWARI TRACTS.

Central Provinces	...	1/6 to 1/14 gross produce.
Bengal	...	much below 1/5 gross produce.
Madras	...	ditto       "       "
Punjab	...	from 1/8 to 1/5       "       "
Berar	...	about 1/15 of       "       "
Ajmere	...	about 1/10       "       "
Deccan	...	probably above 1/15 gross produce.
Panch Mahals (Bombay)	...	1/20 gross produce.
Gujrat	...	1/5       "       "

The significance of these figures is measured by the fact that the rate of assessment is everywhere on the down-grade. The tendency is to greater and greater liberality in the assessment of land revenue, so that these statistics relate to conditions which are gradually changing in favour of the cultivator. There is another side, however, to the shield. It is quite true that, compared with the government of the past, the British Raj is lenient in its levying of land revenue. But it must not be forgotten that the Mahomedan and Hindu rulers of old took their revenue in kind, whereas the British demand can be met only in cash. The levying of revenue in kind not only produced an automatic sliding scale, but it was highly convenient to the cultivator. The latter knew that however poor his crop, the Sirkar would leave him a share sufficient to live upon and to provide seed for the next sowing. If the ryot suffered from unfavourable seasons or other unavoidable causes, the Government suffered with him. Tax gatherers and farmers might be rapacious, but they could not go beyond a certain limit without killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. Under British rule, however, the rate, which is fixed in advance, must be realised in cash. That means that the cultivator is thrown into the hands of the money-lender, who has become an absolutely indispensable factor in the British scheme. The revenue demand may be light, but it cannot be met without recourse to borrowing; and where an intensely ignorant peasantry is bound to borrow from professional usurers whose inherent greed and cunning have been highly developed by centuries of practice, the inevitable result is that the peasant becomes

in time enslaved to the money-lender. That result most unhappily has been attained under British rule, with its rigid justice and its inflexible insistence upon the fulfilment of contracts. Greater elasticity is the supreme need of the land revenue system in India. That will never be attained so fully as under ancient native rule, one reason amongst others being that in modern conditions the payment of revenue in kind is impossible. But it may be secured in part by more frequent revisions of settlements and by increasing the remissions and suspensions of revenue, especially the former, in bad seasons. That the Government is more disposed to such a policy is shown by the remission in 1902-3 of £1,321,500 of arrears of land assessments in distressed districts, and by the laying down of "liberal principles for future guidance," and its readiness "to make further advance in respect of (a) the progressive and graduated imposition of larger enhancements; (b) greater elasticity in the revenue collection, facilitating its adjustment to the variations of the seasons, and the circumstances of the people; and (c) a more general resort to reduction of assessments in cases of local deteriorations, where such reduction cannot be claimed under the terms of settlement." But in contrasting the mechanism of the British system with the more flexible working of land

revenue collection under old native rule, it must not be supposed that flexibility always tells in favour of the ryot. On the contrary, the greater the elasticity, the more are the opportunities for extortion and oppression. As a matter of fact the ancient revenue systems of India were largely tempered by the character of the people on the one hand and of the Government on the other. For example, in Bengal, where, as Lord Macaulay has said, the people were so thoroughly fitted for a foreign yoke, land revenue collection speedily became a system of oppression by agents and underlings. Under the fierce rule of the Marhatta the land tax in Western India left little more than bare subsistence to the ryot. On the other hand, in a country like the Punjab, where the people have always been of a more sturdy

*Flexibility not  
an Unmixed  
Blessing.*

and independent character than those of other Indian provinces, the native rulers had to content themselves with a smaller and more stable share of the produce of the soil.

In his manual on the "Land Revenue Systems of British India," Mr. B. H. Baden-Powell writes :—

"The necessity for a revenue as large and steady as possible is one that presses . . . on every Oriental Government, and the more so as it seeks to maintain large armies for foreign conquest and aims at the construction of large public works, roads, canals, and serais or travellers' halting-places, which are usually the objects to which Oriental Governments turn their attention. As long as the Government was firmly administered it attained this object best by a moderate settlement and a fixed respect for the land-holding customs of the country. But the time always came when the dynasty began to decline, and then wasteful expenditure of every kind became prevalent. The necessities of the king became greater, and his hold over his agents less. Then it was that the revenue was augmented by arbitrary exactions. The original village owners were ousted or fled. Revenue farmers got hold of the village and either got in new tenants or mercilessly rack-rented the old village owners. The revenue contractor got as much out of the villagers and paid as little to the Treasury as he could. The rates of the original settlements (whether Akbar's in Hindustan or Malik Ambar's in Central India) had become customary and consequently well known ; but they were added to by cesses till a compromise was effected and the result became in its turn a customary law. In course of time new cesses were added and new compromises effected and so on. To what a length such a system was carried and in what different forms, depends very much on the locality and its institution and on the character of the native rulers. In Northern India the villagers were strong and often managed to hold their own ; if the land even changed hands, the village institutions survived and did not form or become absorbed in some different kind of estate. In other parts, as in Oudh, Taluqdars arose as the outcome of the revenue difficulties of the State. In Bengal, again, another plan of revenue-collecting received wide development, which was probably facilitated by the complete decay of the village institutions. However this may be, it is always the decline of the native Government that introduces confusion."

The evil results of such confusion were especially apparent in Bengal when the East India Company began to take over the government of the country. The land revenue system was entirely in the hands of middle-men called Zemindars, who stood half-way between the positions of revenue farmers and landlords. The British, finding these men in possession, decided to accept them as an indispensable feature of land revenue collection, and so elevated them to the position of hereditary owners of the soil. The intention was benevolent, and at the time it was believed that its effect would be beneficial

*The Bengal Settlement.*



both to the Government and the people. In those days landlordism was regarded in England with much greater veneration than in more recent times, and it was believed that an institution so important and so valuable in the social economy of England must confer nothing but benefit upon the people of Bengal. Consequently there was established in 1793 what has ever since been known as the Permanent Settlement in Bengal. The prime feature of this institution was the creation by Government of a landlord class who should act as go-betweens with the Government on the one hand and the ryot on the other. The secondary feature was the fixing of the revenue demand from these Bengal Zemindars at a permanent and unalterable amount. Probably no act of the Government of India has been subsequently so bitterly regretted as this. The words "Permanent Settlement" have stunk in the nostrils of each successive Finance Minister of India for the last three generations. The fact is, that in establishing this Permanent Settlement, Lord Cornwallis not only failed to secure the interests of the tenants, but he signed away an annual income to the Government of India which at the present time would amount to at least £5,000,000 a year. Consequently, the other provinces of India, where this Permanent Settlement does not prevail, have to make up that amount to the Government of India year by year. It is a curious commentary upon the character of the Congress movement in India that the Permanent Settlement in Bengal is regarded by the Congress press and party as a measure of the highest statesmanship. The Congress professes to be a popular body, and yet on a question of this kind, where the interests of the masses clash with those of a small and privileged class, it is the latter almost invariably which engages the fervent sympathy of the Congress. In this case it is pretended that the Permanent Settlement has proved its beneficial character by the comparative immunity of Bengal from famine. Obviously this argument is more daring than convincing, and the Government of India, in the resolution of which I have already spoken, found little difficulty in disposing of it. In the first place it was pointed

out that Bengal is not immune from famine. Happily, during the past five years the prosperity of Bengal has been unaffected by the conditions which have produced such lamentable scarcity in other parts of India ; but the famines of 1868-9 and 1877 sufficiently proved that the blessings to be derived from a bloated landlord class do not include protection against the effects of deficient rainfall. In the second place, the assumption that famine is due to economic rather than meteorological causes is fundamentally fallacious. Take the case of Gujarat. That part of the Bombay Presidency is more heavily assessed for land revenue than any other Indian province. Yet until the year 1900 Gujarat hardly knew what famine meant. It is true that in that year it suffered terribly ; but can it be seriously contended that the effect of a high revenue assessment was secretly accumulating during previous years to burst suddenly upon an unsuspecting people ? Purely economic changes do not befall like thunderclaps. It is curious, moreover, that we never hear this doctrine of over-assessment as a cause of famine applied to Native States. There, famines appear to be a mysterious dispensation of Providence. In British India they are the work of a rapacious Government.

The cultivation of opium in British India is a Government monopoly from which revenue amounting to some five million pounds annually is raised. The *Opium.* poppy is cultivated in Western Bengal and the United Provinces. At Patna and Benares there are large Government factories where the opium is manufactured for the market. The total area under cultivation amounts roughly to about six hundred and thirty thousand acres, giving a production of some one million maunds, a maund being equal to a little over eighty pounds. Of this total a very large proportion is exported to China and other parts of Asia. In 1902-3 the total amount sold and exported was 67,831 chests, which was about equal to the average for the previous five years. A chest of opium contains about 140 lbs. This opium is sold by public auction in Calcutta and is then exported by private merchants to China and the Straits. The average price per chest during

the same year was Rs. 1,144. Opium is also cultivated in some of the Native States, especially in Rajputana, but with its production the British Government has no concern. It contents itself with levying a duty on opium which passes through British territory either for local consumption in India or for export. This duty is called Pass Duty ; it amounts to about Rs. 500 per chest, and in 1902-3 the total amount realised was Rs. 9,915,500. These figures serve to show the great value of the opium industry to the Government of India. Owing to a variety of causes, such as war in China and bad seasons in India, the opium output has been decreasing during the past few years with a consequent diminution of revenue, but the demand in China for Indian opium, which is of a very high quality, never falls below a certain minimum, and thus provides a sure source of income to the Indian Government. It is not necessary here to enter upon a discussion of the moral aspects of this opium trade with China. The whole question has been the subject of investigation by a Royal Commission, and readers who are interested in the question may be referred to the evidence taken by that Commission, and to the voluminous, though one-sided, information published by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade. It is only necessary to say here that those people who are seriously exercised as to the evils wrought by the opium traffic would receive more attention from men of affairs if they could suggest some other source of income to replace the opium monopoly in India. India is a poor country and therefore cannot afford to indulge the ethical refinements of comfortable English philanthropists. Until the Government of India can be shown some other way of raising five or six million pounds sterling per annum, the efforts of the anti-opium party are not likely to succeed.

The other item of revenue mentioned earlier in this chapter is salt. Salt duty is practically the only form of taxation which falls upon every class of the community in India. Everybody requires salt, and it is impossible to obtain it in India unless it has first paid duty to the Government ; but in practice

*Salt.*

the impost is an extremely light one, and outside the salt-producing districts there are very few natives of India who know that their salt is taxed at all. The trifling character of the burden upon the consumer is proved by the fact that the total annual revenue from salt for the past few years has been about six million pounds sterling. The total quantity of salt produced in the year 1901 was thirty million maunds, while fourteen million maunds (1,102,546 tons) were imported. The salt is produced in Burma, Madras, and Bombay by evaporation from sea-water, and in Northern India from mines and brine deposits. The importation of salt is limited to Bengal and Burma, the bulk of the importations being from Liverpool. The amount of salt duty is now Rs. 2s. per maund throughout India, but owing to the extension of railways and the general improvement in the means of communication, salt, despite this impost, is cheaper throughout the greater part of India than it was under native rule. Other important heads of revenue include excise, customs, income tax, forests, posts and telegraphs, &c., and for the last three years railways.

The revenue from excise, as might be imagined in a country so poor, and with a population so abstemious as that of India, is a fairly stable quantity.

*Excise.*

During the ten years, however, ending with 1900-1 the net rates from excise duties increased from Rs. 48,867,640 to Rs. 56,064,216, an increase at the rate of 15 per cent., which, however, is to be accounted for less by the expansion of consumption than by the improved control of the excise administration. The sources of excise revenue are various, but the largest is spirits, which of course comprise chiefly native liquors. The complaint is made against the Indian Government that the excise system is designed too exclusively in the interests of revenue, with the result that the sale of intoxicating liquors in India is largely increasing. A system which includes in certain provinces the highly questionable practice of putting licenses up to auction certainly leaves much to be desired, while the pressure put upon District Officers to increase the excise

returns lends countenance to the charge that the Government of India care more for revenue than for the risk of increasing the drinking habits of the people. The system of selling licenses ought to be abolished, and new licenses should be very sparingly granted. The Government of India, moreover, should make it clearly understood that low excise returns will not be imputed to a District Officer for slackness, unless, of course, it means that the people are obtaining liquor from illicit sources.

The amount received from Customs Import Duties varies from three and a half to four crores of rupees per annum.

*Customs.* The general rate of duty is 5 per cent. *ad valorem*, but the free list is a generous one, and many classes of goods pay a duty of only 1 per cent. Sugar from countries granting bounties on export, either direct or indirect, is liable to a countervailing duty equivalent to the amount of bounty. The rate of duty on cotton manufactures is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent; but, as was pointed out in Chapter II., in order to prevent the Indian manufacturer from obtaining an advantage over his Lancashire competitor, the products of the Indian cotton mills are subject to an excise tax equivalent to the import duty.

Judicial stamps also figure prominently amongst the minor heads of revenue. Thanks to the ample facilities afforded under the British system to a poor and ignorant people for indulgence in that most ruinous of all luxuries, the luxury of litigation, the revenue from stamps increases more or less steadily, the amount received between 1896 and 1901 being Rs. 166,848,175. In the same period non-judicial stamps produced Rs. 76,130,682. The income tax in India also belongs to the smaller items of revenue, the fact being that the number of people liable to income tax is extremely small in proportion to the population. The proceeds of the tax, however, until last year, when the limit of exemption was raised from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000, have been growing at an average rate of 3 per cent. annually, pointing to a steady increase in that middle class (consisting of officials, professional men,



and the larger kind of shopkeepers) which is a new and remarkable feature of modern India. An analysis of the various callings of the income-tax payers throws some light upon the social condition of the people. Amongst the professions, barristers and legal practitioners contribute more than four-fifths of the total ; in commerce, money-lenders pay nearly half as much as all other classes of commercial men, while under the head of property, house-owners contribute twice as much as any other class of property holders. These facts show the preference of educated Indians for the unproductive and parasitical professions—if a man cannot secure official employment, he becomes a lawyer. Should he fail in that, he takes to journalism ; capitalists, instead of putting their money into industrial concerns, prefer usury or the acquisition of real property.

The income-tax is never a popular impost in any country, but it is probably nowhere regarded with so much disfavour as in India. There is no doubt that the manner of its assessment opens the door to a great deal of favouritism and undue influence by the subordinate revenue officials. If every taxpayer were willing to produce his books and show the exact amount of his income this complaint probably would not exist, but the Indian trader or professional man has a very strong objection to exposing his affairs in this fashion to official inquisition. Moreover, the books are usually incomplete and unreliable, and would very probably be rejected as such by the assessors. In the majority of cases the levying of income tax is carried out in a very rough-and-ready fashion. The Collector or Deputy-Commissioner deputes one of his assistants to undertake the duty. Notice is given that the Assistant-Collector or Assistant-Commissioner will attend at a certain place and hour to receive objections to income-tax assessments. He is accompanied by the Tehsildar, whose local knowledge is indispensable in such matters to the higher officials. People who think it worth their while to make an objection attend and have their books examined, but in the majority of cases each tax-payer is assessed according to the Tehsildar's opinion of his capacity to pay. The

*Its  
Unpopularity.*

opportunity thus afforded to that official of paying off old scores on the one hand or, on the other, of making to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness are very considerable. Thus, the native income-tax payer is not altogether unreasonable in his dislike of the tax, and it is sometimes said that the unpopularity which the Government have acquired by means of this impost far outweighs the value of the revenue collected. At the same time it must be remembered that the trading and professional classes in India bear a disproportionately small share of taxation. Without an income tax that share would be still smaller. In a phrase since persistently misquoted by the "friends of India," Lord Salisbury, when Secretary of State, laid it down that, as India must be bled the knife should be directed to those parts of the body politic where the loss of blood may be more easily afforded. It is in pursuance of that policy that the Government have instituted an income tax which necessarily falls chiefly upon the mercantile classes.

The revenue from the Post Office and the telegraphs is an annually increasing quantity, and for the last few years railways have ceased to be a loss to the State and have actually produced a balance on the right side.

## CHAPTER VIII

### "THE PROSPERITY" PROBLEM

MUCH has been written of late years on the prosperity of India. There are those who hold (1) that India is growing poorer year by year; (2) that her poverty is directly due to British rule. The official view, *Famine and Poverty.* on the other hand, is a direct negative of both these propositions. The spokesmen of the Government of India affirm that India is growing richer instead of poorer, and that the increase in her wealth is due to wise administration. The late series of famines came opportunely enough for the prophets of the former school. Tales of widespread destitution over areas larger than several European countries put together, seemed to give point to the contention that India is wretchedly poor, and is being bled still poorer by an insatiable Government. It has been shown that famines are due less to a scarcity of food than to a scarcity of money. Even in the leanest years India is still capable of feeding her people, but the people have no money to pay for the food. What does this mean, say the critics of British rule, if not that the agriculturist is so burdened by the exactions of the revenue and tax collectors that he is forced to live from hand to mouth, and can make no provision whatever for a bad season? One other thing that it certainly does mean is that the means of transport in India are now sufficient to distribute the food supplies rapidly and equally all over the Empire. Before the introduction of railways, famine in

one province meant much more than scarcity. It entailed actual starvation upon thousands of people. Central India, perhaps, might be suffering fearful distress, while in the Ganges valley there was enough and to spare. Indeed, it has actually happened within modern times that foodstuffs have lain rotting on the road to famine-stricken districts owing to the impossibility of carrying them over the ground fast enough. With the existing railway system that state of things can never occur again.

Thus, it is quite true that in the late famines there was always enough food for the population affected, and that the trouble arose from the lack of money to pay for it. Whether that is a more or less desirable condition than the entire absence of food is a question capable of only one answer in view of the fact that the Government assumes responsibility for preserving the lives of all its subjects during famine periods. It should be noted that, once famine is officially declared to prevail in any area, the worst part of the people's suffering is over. The Government then sets its machinery of relief immediately to work. Sometimes, indeed, distress becomes acute so suddenly that the authorities are not ready to grapple with the situation at once. Local officials and local governments, moreover, may be too loth to declare the existence of famine. The result in either case is similar. Much distress and even positive starvation occur before the relief system is put in operation. But with the experience now acquired the Government are in a position to deal promptly and adequately with sudden outbreaks of famine, without pauperising the people.

How is it that scarcity of money rather than of food was the chief characteristic of recent famines? That is as much as to inquire how it is that every Indian ryot is not a man of means. It is no more necessary to answer such a question than it is to explain why every householder in England does not get £500 a year. It is sufficient to say that the suggestion is preposterous that the Indian ryot would be able to snap his fingers at a prolonged drought, but for the revenue exacted

*The Burden on  
the Land.*

by the Government. The total amount of land revenue raised annually in India does not exceed in the most favourable year £20,000,000. If this sum were annually remitted the difference to the individual cultivator would be slight.

The incidence of land revenue per head of population on the area assessed is very small. In Bengal it amounts to  $9\frac{1}{2}$  annas, in the United Provinces to 1 rupee 4 annas odd, in Bombay to 2 rupees  $7\frac{1}{2}$  annas, in Madras to about 1 rupee 9 annas, and in no province does it approach 3 rupees per head. Are we to believe that if everybody living by agriculture in India were richer by these small amounts, famines would never occur? Not until the Government is able to command the elements and invoke the monsoon by proclamation will India be fully secure from famine.

It is true that these facts do not dispose of the contention that India is growing poorer. That question, however, ought to be easily decided. The volume of trade and the amount of revenue and expenditure are known down to the last unit. Pessimists in regard to India are disposed to discount the evidence of statistics on the ground, *inter alia*, that they are official. But if we are to doubt all Government statistics we shall never make any progress towards a solution of the question. The most resolute detractors of British rule equally with the most inveterate optimists have no satisfactory foundation upon which to base their conclusions except these official figures. It is, to say the least, inconsistent in the former to declare that the Government is condemned by its own statistics, and, whenever those statistics are favourable, to pooh-pooh them as "official," and therefore "tainted" evidence. We must either accept and abide by the Government statistics or reject them altogether.

Taking the trade statistics for twenty years, we find that in the aggregate both imports and exports have largely increased. In 1882-83 the total imports of merchandise and treasure valued in rupees was 655,488,678, and the exports 845,271,815. In 1901-2 the same items

*Is India Growing Poorer?*



were: imports, 1,093,337,840; exports, 1,363,674,743. The annual average for the five years ended 1883-84 was: imports, 618,137,433; exports, 804,100,659. The annual average for the five years ended 1898-99 was: imports, 885,583,335; exports, 1,139,297,127. These figures include the imports and exports on account of Government. Whatever they mean they certainly signify that the trade of India is increasing. One does not usually associate countries that are growing steadily poorer with an expanding volume of trade. It is said, however, that the large excess of exports over imports shows that India has to pay very dear for the commodities which she buys from other countries. French economists, on the other hand, bewail the fact that their colonies import far more than they export. “They buy a good deal from Europe and they have nothing to sell in return. Consequently, their monetary position is deplorable. Bullion returns to Europe and disappears incessantly, the colony is always a debtor.” Now India stands in an opposite position. Bullion is constantly being poured into India, where a great part of it stagnates in the form of hoarded wealth. In a speech before the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce Lord Curzon quoted an estimate of a certain statistician that the amount of hoarded wealth in India (in the form of ornaments, jewellery, and buried treasure) is not less than 825 crores of rupees, or say 520 millions sterling. Of this hoarded wealth more will be said later. For the present I am only concerned to point out that indications, universally accepted elsewhere as signs of a country’s prosperity, in the case of India fail to support the view that she is growing poorer instead of richer. The volume of trade is one of these indications.

Others may be found in those heads of revenue which vary with the spending power of the people. Salt is one of these. The revenue from this source progressively increased from £5,850,000 in 1899-1900, to £6,040,000 in 1902-3. Excise revenue increased during the same period from £3,859,000 to £4,377,000. Receipts from the Post Office, railways, litigation, and customs also

largely increased during these years, one of which, be it noted, was the worst famine year of recent times. The value of land is a further important indication of prosperity. In a country that is growing poorer and poorer one would expect to find, as in Ireland, that land degenerates towards "prairie value." In India land is the most valuable source of credit, and as an investment it grows in popularity with the trading classes, so much so that special legislation has been enacted for the Punjab, Bundelkhund, and Bombay to check the process of traders and money-lenders dispossessing agriculturists of landed property. The grievance which those classes have made out of that legislation does not suggest that the land is so overburdened with Government assessment as to yield only the most wretched subsistence to those who live by it.

From these premisses—growing trade, expanding revenue (without increased taxation), and improving land values—it

*The Condition  
of the People.*

is surely reasonable to conclude that India is not growing poorer. I do not claim that they prove India to be prosperous, at any rate according to Western ideas of prosperity. The masses of the Indian people are, as they always have been, very poor. Life with them is a steady struggle for the necessities of existence. An ex-Indian official, writing recently, has said: "Millions of peasants in India are struggling to live on half an acre. Their existence is a constant battle with starvation, ending too often in defeat. Their difficulty is not to live human lives—lives up to the level of their poor standard of comfort, but to live at all and not to die. . . . There is, I suppose, no country in the world where the live-stock is so wretched. Speaking generally, it may be said that during two-thirds of the year the cattle are kept just above starvation-point—not, let me add, through the fault of the owner, who, as a rule, is merciful to his beasts. . . . The greater part of the agriculture of the country is dependent upon the periodical rains, and their failure for even one year is enough for widespread misery; while a recurrence of the misfortune in the next raises the popular suffering to the most frightful pitch. We may truly say

that in India, except in the irrigated tracts, famine is chronic—endemic. It always has been." <sup>1</sup> It is never safe to generalise from personal observation in one province in India, and the foregoing extract was written in the light of an experience largely confined to the congested districts of Madras. Still, when an authority like the late Sir William Hunter has declared that millions of Indians never know the luxury of one full meal a day, one can only believe that, for the bulk of the Indian people, life is but a sorry business. This may be admitted without accepting the view that India as a whole is growing still poorer, and that it is British rule which impoverishes it.

There is no doubt that India has to pay dear for the efficient administration and the security from outward attack and inward disorder which the British Government gives her. In a previous chapter reference was made to the so-called "tribute" which India pays to Great Britain. It is this which exercises the minds of those who do not sympathise with the British administration of the country. They point out that the outgoings from India, which they say virtually constitute a tribute to the ruling Power, amount to about twenty millions sterling per annum—as large a sum as the total expenditure on the Army, and very nearly as large as the total annual expenditure upon the post-office, telegraphs, railways, and irrigation combined. It is made up of the following items—

- (1) Interest on debt incurred in Europe for public works.
- (2) Interest on debt incurred in Europe for military expenditure.
- (3) Pensions and pay during furlough of Anglo-Indian officials.
- (4) Remittances for the maintenance of the India Office,<sup>2</sup> for the purchase of warlike munitions and stores, and the Home-charges of British troops.
- (5) Private remittances.

<sup>1</sup> "India and Its Problems," by W. S. Lilly (Sands & Co., 1902).

<sup>2</sup> As the House of Commons has no voice in Indian finance, the charges of the India Office in London are met from the Indian treasury.

By far the most important of these heads are the first two—the public works debt and the military debt. In each case India is merely paying for value received. Indeed, the interest on the railway, irrigation, and other loans is simply a transfer of the earnings of those undertakings, and cannot rightly be called payment by India in the sense in which those who talk of a tribute imply. The military debt is heavy, but it is spread over a great period of years, and has largely been incurred by warlike operations of the past, including the Indian Mutiny and the Afghan War of 1878. India is now peaceful within and secure without her borders. But such a state of things is only to be bought with a price. Every civilised country in the world has to pay heavily for the blessings of peace, and it cannot be expected that India should be an exception to the rule merely because she has acquired those blessings through foreign protection. As for pensions and furlough pay, they are the necessary result of alien rule. So long as Britain holds India, so long will a large proportion of the higher appointments in the administration of the Empire be in British hands. With regard to the fourth of these items, it will have been seen from Chapter V. that steps are being taken to render India as self-supporting as possible in the matter of warlike munitions and stores. It is admissible that India has to pay more than her fair share of expense of the British garrison. This view is held by many people who do not in the least sympathise with the “bleeding India” school. But whether India’s share be fair or unfair, it is still only a case of paying for value received. The question of the price to be paid is quite other than the question whether a price should be paid at all. The security of India requires the presence of a large British garrison, and if India does not pay for it, who will? As for the private remittances, it is difficult to see how India has any grievance here. The savings of officials which are transferred to Europe are hardly worth discussing where millions of pounds are concerned. The private remittances of business houses and individual traders are a larger item, but it is unreasonable to regard them as a tribute from India

to England. South American republics, which are so largely financed by British capital, and whose trade is chiefly in European hands, do not denounce Europe as a blood-sucker because so much money goes from them to Europe. They benefit by the capital and the trade and industry which Europeans carry on within their borders. India is in a similar position, and it is difficult to see why she has a better right to complain.

The truth is that this so-called tribute would be much smaller if Indians themselves would make a greater use of the wealth which they possess. Whether or not that wealth may be correctly estimated at 825 crores of rupees, it is undoubtedly large, and probably quite sufficient to meet the demand for capital which now has to be procured from Europe. It is frequently urged in the native press that British capitalists are mercilessly exploiting India for their own profit. Every industry in which British money and skill are invested is regarded as an “exploitation” of India’s resources. Tea-growing, coal-mining, cloth-weaving, tanning, and other enterprises are all regarded with dislike by the native journalist, because they produce profits which go to European investors. No account is taken of the benefit conferred upon the country by the development of its resources and the employment of its labour. The point constantly emphasised is that these industries produce earnings which do not remain in the country, and it is even urged that they contribute to the impoverishment instead of to the wealth of India. Economically, of course, these representations are contemptible ; practically they are quite unreasonable. India could herself supply all the capital required for these undertakings, if it could only be coaxed off the arms of women and out of holes in the ground where it now lies idle. Doubtless it is too much to expect Asiatic peoples, who have never known any better way than burial of disposing of their wealth, suddenly to avail themselves of the superior facilities which modern commercial enterprise affords. But it might at least be expected that those Indians who call themselves enlightened would use their influence,

*Hoarded  
Wealth.*



for whatever it may be worth, to spread sounder views of the use of wealth, rather than to indulge in futile denunciations of the British capitalists' "exploitation of India." In the economic salvation of India the development of her natural resources, the establishment of new industries, and the improvement of old ones must play a very important part. What has already been achieved is most noteworthy, but it is only a fraction of what might be accomplished. The next chapter consists of some notes on the more prominent features of the industrial and commercial progress which India owes to the British connection.

## CHAPTER IX

### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

THE two most important adjuncts of India's prosperity are railways and irrigation. For many years past the Government of India have devoted large sums of money to the construction and extension of railways, *Railways.* which are now by far the most important means of communication in the country. Early in the occupation of India by the British, roads became a prime object of attention, and the Grand Trunk Road leading from Calcutta to the North-West Frontier is now the most important product of that policy. With the introduction of railways the Government concentrated its efforts upon their rapid extension over the face of the country. The motive was not purely commercial. Military considerations largely entered into the railway policy, but since railways greatly facilitate the concentration of troops at given points, they confer a benefit upon India by saving the necessity of maintaining a larger army. Until the last four years railways were a source of expense rather than of income to the Government of India. India has had to pay very dear for the advantages which the iron road confers upon her. This arises largely from the fact that British capital fights shy of railways in India without a Government guarantee. The consequence is that Government for many years has been paying interest to English investors for money which has produced no return. The loss thus involved amounts to about two million pounds sterling a year. Gradually, how-

ever, these guarantees are lapsing and Government is by degrees acquiring most of the company-owned lines in India, the goal in view being a system of railways entirely owned by the State and either worked directly by Government or leased to commercial companies. The total mileage of Indian railways open for traffic is about 25,000 miles. The country is crossed from Bombay to Calcutta by the Great India Peninsular system. From Calcutta to the extreme North-West runs a trunk-line worked over different sections by various administrations and throwing out branches to Bombay from Allahabad and from Agra, and to Karachi from Lahore. Madras, which has long been in direct rail communication with Bombay, was at length in 1900 linked up with Calcutta. The gross railway traffic earnings in 1900-1 were Rs. 336.5 millions. Since the opening of railways in India over fifty years ago 1899-1900 was the first year that produced a surplus to the State of railway earnings over expenditure charged against revenue. That surplus amounted to nearly  $8\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs of rupees. It is true that this result was principally due to the extra traffic created by famine, but in 1901, when famine no longer made great demands upon the carrying capacity of Indian railways, there was a surplus of over 115 lakhs of rupees. This result was therefore due to the natural development of railway traffic, and the start thus made on the right side has since been well maintained. It must be remembered that Indian railways are heavily handicapped, not only by a considerable mileage of unproductive strategical lines, but also by the necessity of paying interest and redeeming capital in gold. A surplus is only obtained after charging against revenue interest on the capital expended on lines under construction, which are as yet earning nothing, interest on the unexpended balance of the capital deposited by railway companies, and the amount paid yearly by means of sinking funds and annuities for the redemption of the commuted capital of those railways which have been purchased by the State. There need be little doubt that railways will soon take a high place amongst the sources of revenue to the Indian

Government, and the policy, so often attacked by shortsighted critics, of pushing forward the railway development of the country at the greatest possible speed will be amply vindicated. The subject of railways in India is really too vast and fascinating a topic to be dismissed thus in a paragraph, but the limits of this book forbid its being treated at greater length. The iron road is admitted to be the most powerful agent of political power and human solidarity. Its moral effect not only in India but in Asia is incalculable, and it seems almost impertinent to weigh Indian railways in the petty scales of profit and loss. That the Indian railways will be linked with Russia's trans-Caspian system is regarded in many quarters as both inevitable and desirable. The "railway policy" of the Government of India deserves to be judged in the light of the possibilities which such a development must open up, rather than by annual traffic returns.

The tendency to glorify irrigation to the disparagement of railways is greatly to be deprecated. Each is necessary in its own way to the development of the country, and nothing is to be gained by regarding them as rival interests. But in view of the dependence of large parts of India upon an unreliable rainfall, it is not unnatural that a great outcry was raised during the late series of famines for a wholesale extension of irrigation works. One of the most important acts of Lord Curzon's Administration was the appointment, three years ago, of a Commission "to determine the scope which exists for further extensions of State irrigation works and to estimate the probable net cost to the State of carrying out such extensions." The Commission, presided over by Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff, who has won a great reputation as an irrigation engineer both in India and Egypt, spent two years upon their task. Their report has since been published, but action will not be taken upon it until the Government of India has gathered the opinions of provincial Administrations. The report amounts to an exhaustive review of existing irrigation works and the practical possibilities of extension. It shows that 20 per cent. of

the total cultivable area of British India and 10 per cent. in the Native States is annually irrigated. To secure the whole country against famine the proportion of irrigated lands should be at least 33 per cent. of the cultivable area, which means that 74,000,000 acres must be rendered capable of irrigation in order fully to supplement the natural rainfall. In a country of such varying geographical and meteorological conditions this obviously involves a problem of great complexity. The Commission propound a scheme which they regard as the measure of the financial capacity of the State in respect to irrigation during the next twenty years. The result of their proposals, if carried out, will be to increase the total irrigated area of British India by 15 per cent, that is, to 50½ million acres, at a total annual loss of Rs. 7,300,000. As, however, they estimate that about Rs. 3,100,000 would be covered by the lessened future expenditure on famine, the net total loss to the State is set down at only Rs. 4,200,000 per annum.

It remains to be seen how far the Government of India will adopt this programme. Hitherto they have not shown any eagerness to enter upon irrigation projects which did not promise a substantial return upon expenditure. The wisdom of this policy it is not necessary here to discuss, but it is to be noted that the largest of the existing irrigation systems all pay their way, some of them making a handsome return to the State. Such are the well-known Cauvery and Gaudavary canal systems in Southern India. The former irrigates nearly one million acres, and gives a percentage of net revenue on capital of over 33 per cent. The Gaudavary Anicut, by which the waters of that river are turned upon some 750,000 acres of the surrounding country, is a still more magnificent piece of engineering, but the financial result is not so good, the yield being less than half that of the Cauvery scheme. The value of these irrigation projects, however, must not be estimated by the returns of revenue alone. In each of these cases vast areas of comparatively poor country have not only been permanently secured against famine, but have been turned into abundant gardens

*Successful  
Projects.*



capable of pouring food supplies into the adjoining districts. The irrigation system in Southern India also includes a scheme by which half a million acres are watered by the River Kistna, while the Periyar, a river in the extreme south of the peninsula, has been turned in its course from west to east, thus being converted into a tributary of the Vaigai River. The water of these two streams, when the project is completed, will irrigate some 150,000 acres supporting a population of half a million. In Northern India there are several canal systems of larger extent than those in Madras. The Upper Ganges Canal, which was constructed in the early fifties, comprises 459 miles of main channel and 4,297 miles of distributories, and it irrigates close upon one million acres.

The Punjab, however, is pre-eminently the province of vast canal undertakings. The Sirhind Canal comprises over 5,000 miles of waterways, the Bari Doab Canal irrigates over 800,000 acres, while the Chenab Canal, opened in the spring of 1887, now waters a million and a half acres of what was previously almost barren waste. In October, 1901, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab opened the Jhelum Canal, a project which promises to outrival even that of its sister river, the Chenab. Both these irrigation systems are particularly interesting in that they include colonisation schemes. In each case the land irrigated consisted of almost desert country supporting a very scanty population of herdsmen and camel-breeders. The cultivation carried on by these people was both crude and sparse, and the land was covered with vast forests of low scrub and mean, stunted trees, fit only for fuel, or for grazing camels and goats. Irrigation has completely changed the face of the country. First of all, grants of land along the canals were made to selected colonists from the more congested parts of the province. Roads were made, villages constructed, and eventually a railway, connected with the main North-Western system, was run through the heart of the colony. An entirely new town, called Lyallpur, after Sir James Lyall, a late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, was founded and

*The Punjab  
Canals.*

became the centre of this busy and thriving colony, the population of which now numbers about one million souls. The Jhelum colony is being laid out on similar lines, and in a few years another wilderness will have been converted into a populous and fertile terrain. A third project is under consideration, and this, if carried out, will be larger than either the Chenab or the Jhelum system. It consists in a scheme to irrigate the desert of the Western Punjab, known as the Sind Sagar Doab. This tract of country is, if possible, more desolate and forbidding than the two Doabs which have been converted into the Chenab and Jhelum colonies, and the proposal to turn it into a highly cultivated country is even more ambitious. The River Indus would supply unfailing stores of water, but it is doubtful whether the soil of these wastes is worth the great expense of irrigation. A reconnaissance preliminary to a survey, however, has already been made of this great area, and the irrigation authorities are believed to be favourable to the scheme. A still larger project of the Punjab engineers is to convey the waters of the Jhelum into the Chenab, so as further to extend the irrigated area on that river. It is also proposed to carry water from the Chenab across the River Ravi for the irrigation of a vast tract of desert country in the Montgomery district, and to utilise the waters of the Sutlej for the fertilisation of the land on its left bank, which is at present dependent on the rainfall. These schemes, together with the undertakings already completed, will put the Punjab in the front rank of irrigated countries, and even the achievements of the Egyptian engineers will have to take a second place.

Besides canals, tanks fill an important part in the agricultural economy of India. This form of water storage is most common in Southern and

*Tanks.*

Western India, and the majority of the tanks were constructed under native rule. Some of them have been repaired and improved by the British Government, which has also undertaken the construction of new tanks in many parts of India, particularly in the Bombay Presidency and in Ajmere-Marwara. As means of irrigation, tanks

are obviously inferior to canals, especially to the canals supplied by the great rivers of Northern India, which are fed by Himalayan snows. Tanks are entirely dependent on the rainfall, and thus are unreliable as a protection against famine. The first thing that happens in a drought in India is that the tanks become dry, and the people are left just as badly off as though they had no tanks at all. In countries, however, such as the Bombay Deccan and Rajputana, where there are few or no large rivers, tanks are the best expedient available, but their limitations should not be overlooked by those persons who blame the Government of India for having neglected this form of water storage.

The well is the third means of irrigation in India. Wells, however, are usually constructed by private enterprise, and are the exclusive property of the men  
*Wells.* upon whose lands they are situated. Govern-

ment, however, grants loans on liberal terms for agricultural improvements, and especially for the construction of wells. These loans are called *takavi*, and their usefulness is only limited by the formality involved in granting them, and the strictness with which interest and repayment are exacted. Although well irrigation is a most important institution in India, it is by no means perfect as a protection against famine. The bullock universally supplies the power employed in raising the water. Now, bullocks must be fed, and in seasons of drought the ordinary cheap fodder, which makes their food, becomes scarce and very soon unobtainable. Hence it becomes necessary to feed the well-bullocks upon the very crops which they are watering, and in bad seasons cases have occurred where the whole of a crop or crops watered by a particular well have been eaten up by the bullocks working that well. This, also, is a point to be considered by critics who denounce the Indian Government for its supineness in the matter of wells. There is no doubt, however, that abundant scope exists for the extension of well-construction on scientific principles, especially artesian wells, and the substitution of pumping machinery for the feeble and costly animal-power now employed. The underground supply of water in India, especially throughout

the vast alluvial plain of Upper India, must be enormous, and it still awaits the study of the geologist and the engineer.

Space forbids further pursuit of these two important and fascinating subjects—railways and irrigation in India; and although their treatment has been far from complete, it must suffice to indicate in some measure their immense value to Indian agriculture, beside which every other industry of the Empire sinks to insignificance. It is computed that about two-thirds of the population of India, or more than double the entire population of the United States of America, are dependent on agriculture. It may well be understood that the output of such hordes of workers must be considerable, especially when it is remembered that two harvests a year are the general rule throughout India. The principal exports consist of the great agricultural staples, such as rice, wheat, cotton, oil-seeds, and so forth. The chief manufactures are derived from agricultural products. The mineral wealth of India for the most part is undeveloped, hence the supreme importance of agriculture and the immense value of irrigation, which tends to insure the industry against the fickleness of the seasons, and of railways, which put the produce in immediate and rapid touch with the markets either inland or abroad.

India must always be agricultural first and foremost. Nevertheless, so long as its other resources are so inconsiderable, its poverty will continue, and the vast bulk of its population will always live a hand-to-mouth existence from one harvest to another. Perhaps the greatest of Indian problems is to multiply India's resources by the establishment and improvement of manufactures and the opening up of the mineral wealth of the Empire. The pressure of population upon the land increases year by year; holdings are divided and subdivided until the produce of an acre, and even half an acre, has to support an entire family. The creation of new industries and the extension of those which already exist is the best means of relieving this congestion, and

*The Preponderant Importance of Agriculture.*

*Manufactures.*



it will be interesting to notice what has already been achieved in this direction.

The most important manufacturing industry in India is that of cotton. There are nearly 200 mills in India, employing a daily average of 156,039 persons, with an estimated nominal capital of about eleven millions sterling. These mills, the majority of which are situated in Bombay, consume about 5,000,000 cwts. of raw cotton annually, or more than a third of the entire cotton production of India. Unfortunately, owing to a variety of causes, the industry is not in a flourishing condition. The severe visitation of plague in Bombay in 1896-7 was immediately followed by a disastrous famine. On the heels of these calamities came trouble in China, where the markets were already flooded by excessive importation. Over-production has been a serious evil with the Indian cotton mills, and until India can grow the superior cotton produced in America, she will necessarily be restricted to the China market, and cannot hope to avail herself of the enormous consumption of high-class cotton goods within her own borders. Another serious handicap to the Indian cotton industry is the countervailing excise duty on Lancashire. If the excise duty were removed the Indian manufacturer would reap a slight advantage in the Indian market, which would probably make a great difference in his prosperity. But India in these matters is not her own mistress, as I endeavoured to explain in the second chapter.

Tea takes a high place amongst the manufactured products of India. The amount of the tea exports by sea in 1903-1904 was over 200,000,000 lbs. The tea plantations, or "gardens," as they are always called in India, are to be found in Assam, districts of Bengal, Dehra Doon (United Provinces), the Kangra Valley in the Punjab, and three districts in South India. They employ many thousands of labourers, and in Assam an elaborate system of immigration has sprung up from the congested districts of Behar. The immigrants serve the planters for a term of years under indentures for wages



regulated by the State. This system of immigration is the subject of perpetual controversy, the native malcontents and their European sympathisers calling it "legalised slavery," while the planters represent it to be a boon to the immigrant, and a most valuable agency for the development of a backward province. This is a question that cannot be discussed here, but the impartial reader may be reminded that nothing is easier or (to a certain class of mind) more attractive than to raise the cry of slavery against European employers of coloured labour. Like so many other tropical and semi-tropical products, tea suffers greatly from over-production. From this cause alone many of the Indian tea estates are in a precarious financial condition, and until more markets are opened up for the disposal of their produce, this state of things must continue. Great efforts are being made to introduce tea to the dietary of the Indian native, and some success has already been achieved in this direction.

Coffee is another commodity produced by European enterprise in India, which is likewise in a bad way. Over 230,000 acres are under coffee, all in Southern India, but owing to competition with Brazil and to hostile tariffs in Europe, the Indian coffee-planter barely makes a living. This must be the case with all products of British dependencies which cannot find a market in the Mother Country, for British dependencies (not self-governing colonies) being unable to engage in a tariff war with foreign Powers, they are thrown upon the chances of the English market, and if that be closed to them by the action of foreign bounties, or highly protective tariffs having the same effect as bounties, their products are bound to suffer severely.

More valuable and promising than tea and coffee (which, like nearly all tropical products, are always liable to suffer from over-production) are the mineral resources of India. In the precious metals India is not richly endowed. The Kolar goldfields have a worldwide reputation, but relatively their output is small, and there are no indications that India will ever

*Mineral  
Wealth.*

rank high as a gold-producing country. Coal, however, undoubtedly has a great future before it. There are over 400 coal mines in India, most of them being located in Bengal, and the annual output now exceeds 6,000,000 tons. The rapid progress of the industry in recent years may be judged from the following extract from the "Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India" for 1900-1901 :—

"Even as late as 1880 the output of coal from the Bengal mines hardly touched a million tons, and this output was not doubled for fourteen years more. The two million tons put out in 1894 increased to four millions in 1899, and to approximately five millions in 1900. The beginning of the activity which now marks the industry does not in fact go back further than the last six or seven years. In other parts of India also progress has been made, but the output is small, except at Singareni, where it is now approximating to half a million tons. The industry gives employment to some 89,000 persons, and the capital invested in it by Joint Stock Companies is about Rs. 133 lakhs (paid up). There is also a large but unknown investment of capital by private mine owners and by the State. . . . The Indian railways burn it in increasing quantities, the consumption in 1900 being 1,867,634 tons, which is 31 per cent. of the whole production. The consumption of English coal by the railways was under 57,000 tons."

There is every probability that the Indian coal industry will go on expanding, with the result that a great stimulus will be given to Indian manufactures up-country, where fuel is becoming a serious problem owing to Government's lax control of the fuel forests and the denudation of the land in newly irrigated areas. The existing coalfields are but imperfectly explored, and it is probable that others, now understood to exist, will be found to be commercially workable. The Geological Survey of India is engaged in surveying the coalfields already being worked, and in prospecting for others, and the result of their investigations is already promising. The drawback at present is the cost of transport, which renders Bengal coal an almost prohibitive luxury in distant provinces. If good and easily workable coal be discovered in Bikanir, where investigations are being conducted, the benefit to the whole of North-Western India would be very great. Iron is produced on a considerable scale at Raniganj, where it is found side by side with coal, but the vast iron deposits in the

Salem district of Madras cannot be worked owing to the great expense of bringing coal to the spot.

From this rapid sketch of the industries of India some idea may be gathered of the direction and extent of the material progress of the Empire. Thanks in the first place to settled government, in the second to a consistently moderate revenue assessment upon the land, and thirdly to the stimulus imparted by railways and irrigation, agriculture, the foundation industry of India, has expanded, and is expanding, to an extent impossible under other conditions. Unfortunately that expansion, great as it is, is not sufficient to keep ahead of the steady growth of population and its increasing pressure on the land. The manufacturing and mining industries of India tend to relieve that pressure, but in order to achieve substantial results in that direction those industries must attain a far greater importance than they have reached.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IX.

The following table shows the total volume of Indian trade for the five years ended 1902-03 :—

(Rs. 15 = £1.)

	1898-99.	1899-1900.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.
<b>IMPORTS—</b>					
Merchandise ... ..	Rs. 683,803,412	Rs. 707,118,634	Rs. 762,778,853	Rs. 8,147,081,170	Rs. 787,879,084
Gold ... ..	88,400,542	114,478,674	118,713,827	82,976,205	131,466,553
Silver ... ..	90,439,025	951,064,458	45,922,253	113,507,591	121,090,721
Total Imports ... ..	Rs. 862,642,979	916,703,766	927,414,933	1,011,191,966	1,040,436,358
<b>EXPORTS—</b>					
Foreign Merchandise re-exported	Rs. 33,711,965	Rs. 32,924,912	Rs. 32,085,314	Rs. 326,032,218	Rs. 29,356,132
Indian Merchandise ... ..	1,093,502,765	1,056,836,961	104,160,984	1,212,045,021	1,258,807,516
Gold ... ..	23,366,460	20,081,962	43,058,851	33,664,788	36,773,923
Silver ... ..	50,715,347	59,418,443	31,685,700	50,960,877	51,326,185
Total Exports ... ..	Rs. 1,201,296,537	1,169,262,278	1,148,434,849	1,329,273,904	1,376,263,756

The totals for 1903-04 are :—Imports (including treasure), Rs. 1,155,000,000 ; Exports (merchandise only), Rs. 1,538,500,000. The years 1899-1901 were famine-stricken ; but the subsequent advance in exports is very striking.

## CHAPTER X

### ENGLISH INFLUENCE

**I**N the preceding chapters an effort has been made to give some idea of the machinery of administration in India and the nature of its output. We have seen how outward security and internal order are maintained ; how justice is administered, how the revenue is raised ; and what progress the Empire is making in material prosperity. All these matters, however, leave untouched the most interesting aspect of British rule in India. That is, the effect upon the character of the people of Western administration, Western ideas of the obligations of rulers to the ruled, Western methods of commerce and industry, and Western teaching—religious, moral, and scientific. It is the fashion just now greatly to minimise the extent of that effect.<sup>1</sup> We are told that the administration of Asia by Europe is merely a passing phase ; that the legions and argosies of the West will pass away, and that the soul of the East will remain as it was before ever their thunder was heard from afar or their sails first rose above the horizon. As to England in India, it is said that an empire which was born in a day may perish in a night, leaving not a wrack behind. What are the permanent marks which Britain is making upon the surface of India ? Most of her roads, if neglected for a decade, would degenerate into rough and hardly discoverable cart-tracks. A similar fate would sooner or later overtake her railways

*England's  
Monument in  
India.*

<sup>1</sup> See "Asia and Europe," by Meredith Townsend (Constable & Co.).



and bridges if the protection and care of a strong Central Government were removed. Canals are equally unpromising as monuments ; moreover, India had her great irrigation systems before the English were heard of. Few of the public buildings erected by them in India are likely to stand for many generations—fewer still deserve to do so. Calcutta, indeed, is the creation entirely of the British, but the present condition of many ancient seats of commerce in Asia suggests melancholy reflections as to the probable fate of a city, great and flourishing indeed, but founded on a mud-flat and situated many miles up a shallow and dangerous river. As to our system of laws, it is only in criminal law that we have given India an entirely new code, and there is no guarantee that it will outlast our dominion. There remains the British system of land records for the purpose of assessing the land revenue, but, admirable as it is, it does not appeal to the imagination as a worthy monument of British rule in India. When we come to the less palpable evidences of Western influence—moral and intellectual changes amongst the people—we are reminded that those changes affect such a very small class, and even in their case the change is so obviously superficial, that they are but ripples upon the vast ocean of Asiatic conservatism.

These views are doubtless the result of a reaction from the optimism of previous generations. Starting with the conviction that what was good for the West must be equally good for the East, our fathers inclined to believe that it was only necessary to transplant Western institutions to Indian soil in order to bring about the regeneration of India. Colleges for the inculcation of economics according to Mill, and history according to Macaulay, Universities on the London model, and municipal bodies with real elections, these were to be the beginnings of a new heaven and a new earth for the people of India. From them development would be easy to the full-blown representative institutions which were the goal and the means of "progress." Opinion has changed during the past twenty years. We are less convinced now of the inherent excellence of representative institutions and all that

*Men, not  
Systems.*

they denote. It has been discovered, even in England, that the manners of a nation are not necessarily improved by free education, that the Parliamentary system and "national efficiency" may easily part company; and that local self-government is often distinguished by an aptitude for accumulating financial liabilities. The idols having been broken in the innermost chambers of the temple, the poor replicas of them that have been set up in the outer courts excite nothing but pity and contempt. The present generation has lost its faith in those institutions which were the glory of an earlier age; and it is no longer believed that they will provide India with a short-cut to salvation. From that the step is easy to the conclusion that British rule is only a transient phase; that the soul of the people remains aloof behind an impenetrable *purda*.

The mistake of the older generations arose from a blind faith in machinery. It was forgotten that the kingdom of

*Education.* God is within you; that to regenerate a people it is necessary to begin with their hearts, and that codes and institutions do not make character. Of the old confidence in the virtues of a smattering of Western knowledge and manners I came upon a rather pathetic instance recently in a book published eleven years before the Mutiny. It is an account of the travels in Central Asia and Europe of one "Mohan Lall, Esq.," a Kashmiri educated in English, who subsequently proved himself useful to the East India Company in Afghanistan, Turkestan, and Persia. The book includes a memoir of the author by his former patron, Mr. C. E. Trevelyan, who speaks of Mohan Lall as the firstfruits of that educational system "which to all appearances is destined to change the moral aspect of the whole of Upper India." The establishment of an English class at Delhi is hailed as "the commencement of one of the greatest moral changes that has ever taken place on the face of the globe." The memoir concludes with the claim that the author's mental and moral superiority to his fellows was due simply to his knowledge of the English language. "This," says the enthusiastic Mr. Trevelyan, "is the simple cause of Mohan Lall's elevation

of character ; and can it be doubted that, under the Divine blessing, the same means which have produced such a decided effect in raising an individual in the scale of civilisation and honour, will, if properly applied, lead to the same result in regard to the entire population of this great country ?” Against this sanguine forecast may be set the views of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab on the results of that system which was to change the moral aspect of the whole of Upper India. In the Punjab Government’s “Proceedings, No. 606,” dated February 18, 1873, we read that instruction in English has produced neither scholars nor gentlemen. “The Lieutenant-Governor desires that the (Education) Department take special care that the good manners natural to Oriental youth are not lost at school. English education is not a desirable thing if it only signifies sufficient acquaintance with the English language to write and speak ungrammatically, sufficient acquaintance with English literature to be shallow, and with English history to be insolent.” That was written thirty years ago. In the meantime has our “educational system” approached any nearer to raising the entire population of the country “in the scale of civilisation and honour” ? We could not go to a better authority for an answer than to the University Commission appointed by Lord Curzon. In that report, amid much apology of the system, the Commissioners “admit that the acquirements of Indian graduates are in many cases inadequate and superficial. After all allowance is made, it is most unsatisfactory to be told that the Indian B.A. not unfrequently lacks the general training which he requires to fit him for the business of life, or for a further course of study.” Many much more severe views of the result of English education might be quoted. It will suffice to give one of them in an extract from an article on “University Reform in India” in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1903 :—

“We have got,” says the writer, “senates guided by personal, not educational motives ; European professors who lecture during prescribed hours, and spend the rest of their time as far away as may be ; native professors who prepare four-anna cram-books ; students who accumulate degrees wholesale, as if they were magic amulets ; students who fail to pass year after year, and in the end claim

that their very failure possesses something of the same magical powers. . . . They are all of our making, because we have been too weakly polite to tell our friends the truth, and have trusted our methods to the hands of men, able enough in their own lines, who despised or did not understand our thoughts."

In other words, we have placed our faith in systems and methods and have ignored or neglected the personal factor. We have depended on the letter rather than the spirit, forgetting that the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. That seems to me to be the whole secret of our failure, in so far as we have failed, to produce any essential moral change in India. I have quoted these views on education because it is in that direction that one naturally looks for the result of British teaching and influence. There, unfortunately, the results are admitted in the friendliest quarters to be superficial and disappointing. So much money spent every year on schools and colleges, so many students admitted, so many B.A.'s passed—that seems to be the sum total of India's progress along the paths of knowledge. If we turn to local self-government we shall find almost everywhere stagnation and inefficiency, with local variations in favour of sectarian animosity. The native Press, for the most part, combines the barest minimum of information with a vast quantity of opinion, racial jealousy, open or ill-disguised, being the invariable motive. So one might go through the gamut of modern institutions in India, showing that each key produces a false note, and that the whole effect is feeble and discordant.

But in passing judgment on the apparently superficial results of Western influence, we must ourselves beware of superficiality. No one is entitled to dogmatise *Moral Progress.* in this matter unless he has looked well below the surface. And the majority of those who are most intimate with native life and thought believe that some moral change is taking place in India. Its extent is probably limited to the personal contact of the people with Englishmen of good character and high ideals. That personal contact is the essential ingredient in all prescriptions for the infusion of the Western spirit into the Asiatic mind. Without it the medicine inevitably turns sour.



Western education in Eastern hands, or in the hands of Europeans who, as the *Quarterly Reviewer* already quoted observes, "lecture during prescribed hours and spend the rest of their time as far away as may be," is bound to fall short of its highest aims. The result is to acquire the shell without the kernel, the letter without the spirit. Similarly with public administration. To give the people the full benefit of the spirit which should animate British rule in India, not only Britons, but Britons who are imbued with and who believe in that spirit are necessary. It has been remarked that there are two classes of District Officers in India—those who take an interest in their work and those who don't. The same might be said of all public officers in India, but in each instance it is the first class which acts as a medium for the spread of the best kind of Western influence, and in varying degrees all Europeans worth their salt are helping, for the most part unconsciously, in the process. It is impossible that the natives of India should be unaffected by the constant example, in so many directions, of zeal, integrity, energy, and efficiency. In this way the English are leaving their mark upon India. The result is seen in the gradual assimilation by the intelligent classes of higher standards in public and social life. Ideas of public spirit are spreading, slightly indeed, but still appreciably. Philanthropy, always a prominent feature in Indian life, is being pressed into more profitable channels than that of indiscriminate beggar-feeding. Numerous associations of one kind and another have been established, to secure the advantages of education or to improve the social status amongst particular castes or in special localities. Many individual Indians, also, are men whose enlightenment under the influence of Western education is real and therefore beneficial. Such men as the late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan amongst the Muhammadans, the late Mr. Justice Ranade amongst the Hindus, and Mr. Pherozeshah Mehta, a prominent Parsi, afford practical proof of the possibility that Asiatics may be genuinely imbued with the Western spirit without being mere apers of European manners. The Social Congress, an outgrowth of the National Con-



gress, illustrates a tendency even in a somewhat unpromising quarter to recognise that India stands chiefly in need, not of political agitation, but of social regeneration. It must be admitted that the Social Congress evokes much less enthusiasm than its parent organisation, the business of attacking a Government being much more attractive than that of studying one's own reformation. Nevertheless the Congress is a noteworthy symptom of a genuine awakening in India to the need for social regeneration and moral revival. It is sometimes said that if British rule broke up to-morrow all this talk of social reform would become as silent as the political agitation which is only possible under a lenient but powerful *régime*. The fires of *Suttee* would be relighted, female infanticide, which still lingers amongst the Rajputs, would be openly resumed, and the limitation of the age of consent in child marriage would be forgotten by the people, just as one forgets an unpleasant dream on waking from sleep. The meaning is that social reform in India has taken no root whatever, but that it is simply enforced by the British Government and will disappear on the same day that the Government lacks the power to make its decrees effective. In so far as these reforms are really repugnant to the spirit of the people that view is probably correct. But the continuance of the present *régime* gradually ensures popular approval of them. We are creating a public conscience in regard to these things by rendering them liable to the operations of the Penal Code. It is reasonable to hope that when the Penal Code and the authority on which it rests have both disappeared, the conscience will remain.

But as these prohibitions depend, and will still depend for many long years, ultimately on the bayonets of the British soldier, so the positive virtues to which we are attempting to woo the people depend on the presence and example of well-meaning and hard-working Europeans. The error to be avoided is that of supposing that systems will effect the salvation of India. It is not systems so much as men, and men of the right stamp, that are required for the work. This

*British  
Aloofness.*

has been proved in the matter of education ; it is proved in the ordinary administration wherever the public officer becomes, willingly or unwillingly, a mere feeder of the red-tape machine ; it is proved in every municipality where the District Officer does not or cannot exert his influence to guide and drive the members in the way they should go. It may be suggested that the growing tendency to fix the gulf which divides natives and Europeans in India shows that this personal factor in the spread of Western ideas is becoming of less account, and that to depend so largely upon it is to lean on a broken reed. It is true that intercourse between Europeans in India tends to become less intimate. Frequent leave in England is now possible, whereas thirty or forty years ago a visit Home was of the rarest occurrence. Englishmen in India marry and settle down more readily now that it is so easy to send their wives and children Home or to the hills for the hot weather. As the European community increases its social life grows more self-sufficing, and Europeans and natives see less of each other than ever outside official or business relations. All this must be admitted, but then it must be remembered that what is lost in decreased intimacy between the two races is gained in the closer touch which Anglo-Indians of to-day keep with English life. The sentiment which heaves a sigh of regret for the old-fashioned "Qui-Hai," with his heavy hospitality, his *hooka*, and his harem, is merely a sentiment. It is impossible to feel genuinely sorry that Josh Sedley is an extinct type. One could wish that he had been more generally succeeded by Colonel Newcome. But the modern Anglo-Indian, aloof as he may be in many ways from native life, is at least respectable ; and where he does his duty faithfully, he fulfils his part in the dissemination of what is best and likely to be most permanent in Western influence.

What the Indian admires in the Englishman is his plain virtues of honesty, justice, and courage. He may despise our restlessness, our frantic exertions after amusement, our worship of speed, and our horror of tranquillity ; but integrity and reso-

*Unpopularity of  
the Englishman.*

lution command his respect, and these qualities can be fully exercised by the European without close intercourse with native society. It is probable indeed that the Anglo-Indian loses much popularity by his deliberate separation from native life. Real sympathy with people of other races never was a distinguishing characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon, and it is certainly not likely to develop in the face of the barriers of caste and female exclusion with which the natives of India surround themselves. But popularity is one thing, and not altogether an important thing; respect is another. It would be absurd to pretend that we are loved in India. On the other hand we are certainly not hated. It has been well said that the schoolboy's description of his head master, "a beast, but a just beast," would probably reflect the most active feeling of Indians towards their rulers. With the great mass of the people there is no feeling at all. Patient acquiescence is their only attitude towards the British Raj. They would like to be relieved of the harassments of minor officials, and they would rejoice if the Government would occasionally wink at a breach of contract with the money-lender. The impersonal and automatic character of British rule is frequently repugnant to the Indian mind. But if our rule lasts long enough they will learn to appreciate its compensating characteristics of impartiality and efficiency.

It is impossible in these pages to specify the evidences of that process of regeneration which many shrewd observers believe to be in operation in India. The point that I would emphasise in this chapter is that the continuance of that process depends upon the presence of able and honest Europeans, not merely at the head of the Government, but in all branches of the Administration, and, wherever possible, in unofficial walks of life as well. One cannot leave this subject without referring to the work of Christian missionaries in India, whose influence extends far beyond their directly religious operations. Even in that respect their success is noteworthy, as the statistics of the last census indicate. But apart from that India owes much to the missionaries. Their activity

*Christian  
Influence.*

has been especially displayed in connection with education. It is in the Mission colleges that one finds an approach to that real education which the mere memorising of text-books cannot impart. Here you have that personal influence without which the most admirable systems are in vain. No doubt the Mission colleges suffer by the necessity to secure a good percentage of passes in the University examinations. Thus, the manufacture of B.A.'s is the immediate purpose with them as with the Government and native institutions with which they compete. Nevertheless they succeed to a large extent in producing men as well as graduates. This is acknowledged on all hands, and the reason is to be found in the fact that the Missionaries are not only enthusiastic in their work of teaching, but that they endeavour to secure a personal influence over their pupils. In other directions also the results of Christian propagandism are conspicuous. Sir Charles Aitchison, a late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, declared that "one of the most hopeful results of Mission work is the lesson which is silently infusing, through native society and vernacular literature, ideas of integrity, honour, philanthropy, truth, purity, and holiness, which are distinctly Christian." A similar testimony, but more striking as coming from a non-Christian, was given by the late Keshub Chunder Sen, founder of the Brahmo Somaj, who said, "The spirit of Christianity has already pervaded the whole atmosphere of Indian society, and we breathe, think, feel, and move in a Christian atmosphere. Native society is being roused, enlightened, and reformed under the influence of Christian education." This is certainly an extreme estimate of the situation, even if confined to that limited section of Indian society with which Keshub Chunder Sen was familiar. Still, after making all due allowances, there remains a residuum of truth. A small part of the Indian people is consciously feeling the influence of the West, a very much larger part is unconsciously affected by it. How much further and deeper the impulse will go, who can tell? It seems reasonable at least to believe that it is not destined to lose itself, like a desert river, in the sands.

*March 1907*





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